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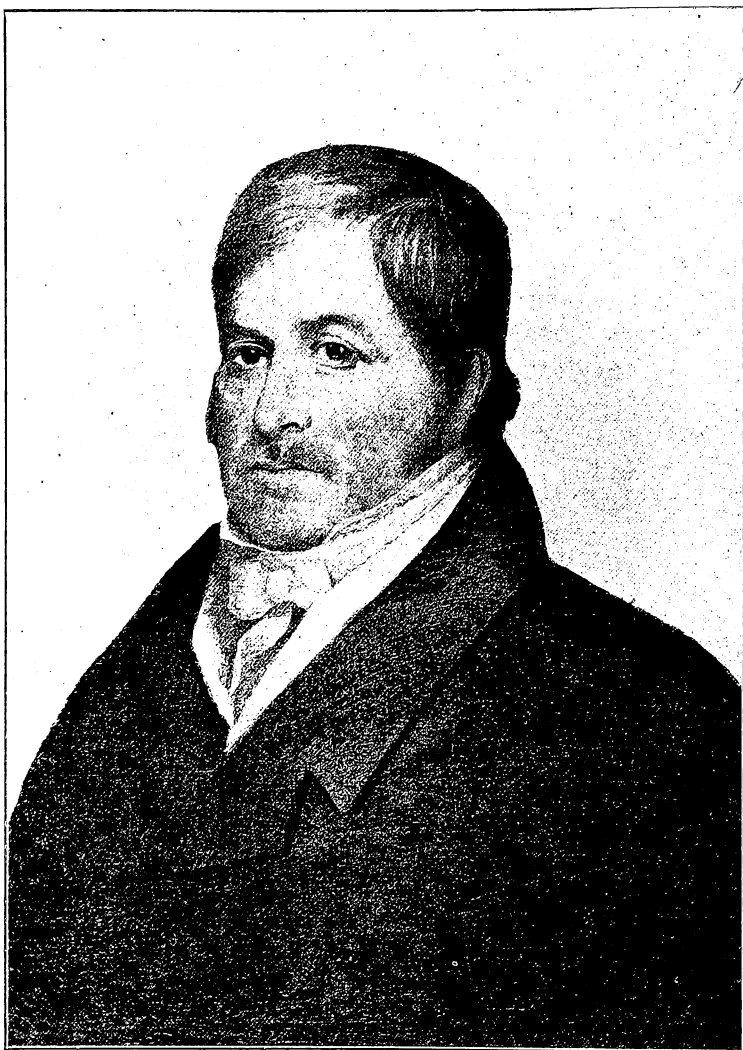












SOLOMON SIBLEY  
1769—1846

# HISTORY OF DETROIT

1780 to 1850

## FINANCIAL and COMMERCIAL



Report of Historiographer, Clarence M. Burton

1917

Detroit, Michigan.

STATE DEPARTMENT

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## FOREWORD.

In the following pages an attempt has been made to depict some of the most interesting and important financial events that have transpired in the city under American control prior to the year 1850. The fluctuations of business as shown by the real estate sales, tax levies, business disasters and building reports have been noted and these and many other matters of the same general character have been gathered together.

The study of these items is interesting and the knowledge that through every decade our city has made material progress makes the study still more interesting and instructive.

Detroit, January, 1917.

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## INTRODUCTION

The following pages are reprinted, with some additions, from a series of articles published in the Detroit News in 1913. At the time the publications began there were faint rumblings of financial depression in various parts of the United States and Canada, but only rumblings were heard at Detroit, and the people there did not want to listen and refused to hear the storm that was coming. The attempt of the writer was to show the periods at which disasters had overtaken the city in the past, and without attempting to foretell, to indicate the probability of another period of depression in the near future.

If in the past these periods had occurred at nearly regular intervals of twenty years, there was at least a probability that we would not pass by the year 1913 without feeling the commencement of a new term. In the fall of that year the banks suddenly began to fear for the immediate future, and for some time refused to extend further credit on real estate loans unless they were assured that the money would not be used for speculative purposes. Soon the bank funds began to accumulate and in the early spring too much money was on hand and loans were freely made on commercial paper.

Proceedings in Congress were of such a nature that little inducement was held out to business in general. The larger factories in Detroit, like the stove works, bridge and iron works, automobile factories and others,

were forced to dismiss a part of their working force or curtail the hours of labor.

In the first part of the year the building plans, begun in 1913, were being carried out, so that there was no appreciable diminution of work. The great buildings, the Whitney Block, Statler Hotel, Tuller Hotel and Kresge Building, all fronting on the Grand Circus, were projected in 1913 or earlier, but the work did not begin until late in 1913 or in the early part of 1914. A great number of smaller buildings were likewise planned at an earlier date and work on them was begun in the early part of 1914. These buildings kept the list of building permits up to the average of former years. As soon as these buildings were under way the permits began to drop off.

Now began the sight of stores, flats and buildings "for rent," a thing unknown in the city for five or six years previously. Families began to "double up" and soon there were two or more families living where one had lived before. Cheaper quarters were sought by those who were out of work, or who worked only a portion of the time. Rents also began to decline somewhat, though landlords were quite as unwilling as others to acknowledge that there was anything the matter with the "times."

Politically, efforts were made by the party out of power to fasten responsibility for the coming depression upon the party in power. This effort was made solely for political purposes, for, as we see by the past history, this depression was due anyway and would have arrived at this time no matter what political party was in power.

These periods of depression do not "happen." They come in obedience to the laws of human nature and of trade.

It is useless here to enter into a discussion of the reasons for these financial revolutions, but it might be stated, as a starter for debate, that people at work think that they earn more money than they receive for their labor. They by various methods compel an increase in their wages and use the increase in the purchase of things they have not heretofore had. This increases the demand for such articles and hence opens new factories and gives employment to additional persons. Wages being increased, employers are compelled to increase the selling prices of articles manufactured. This increased price is cheerfully paid by the consumer, who is living better than he ever has before by reason of his increased wages. So the wheel turns around and at each revolution there is an increase of wages and a corresponding increase in the cost of production and of selling. The limit is reached. The manufacturer being forced to pay more wages than he should, can make no profit and either closes his shop or fails. In either case the employee is forced into idleness and suffers from want much more severely than if he had not lived in affluence. One failure produces another and soon the staple business houses and factories of a few years ago, are tumbling down like houses of cards.

No political party—no single individual—no society is to blame for the disasters that follow. We are all to blame—each one for the little part he plays to bring about the dire results. Let us reach the bottom quickly now and on a firm foundation begin to build anew. A

few will remember the years of depression and take heed for the future, but the many will forget.

And now again comes before us, as of old, Pharaoh's dream of the seven fat kine and of the seven lean kine, and his dream of the seven good ears of corn and of the seven thin ears.

"Behold there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt; and there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt and the famine shall consume the land; and the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of the famine that followed for it shall be very grievous."

The above introduction was written in the early part of 1914, when the business interests of the city began to feel the depression that had started in the preceding year. Soup houses for the multitude of unemployed, and public kitchens for the poor, were opened in various parts of the city and in the basement of the City Hall itself. Poverty, destitution, want and hunger were parading the streets and afflicting many who were in fairly good circumstances in the preceding year. Long lines of unemployed sought the many employment agencies in the city in attempts to find work, and in most cases their applications were in vain. In August came the startling news of the Great European War that is now upon us. The world was frightened. The stock exchanges were closed and a business stagnation worse than ever, settled down at once.

Our government declared its neutrality in the conflict. The first idea of neutrality was to avoid dealing with either side in contraband goods or munitions, but very soon the manufacturers and bankers argued themselves into the belief that they could remain neutral if they expressed a willingness to supply both sides without discrimination. No matter how ingenuous this argument was, it was accepted by all the neutral nations, and in a short time contracts were made for supplying the allies with articles of all kinds. It is out of place here to argue that this was not a fair expression of neutrality, but it was accepted. Great loans were made to England, France, Russia and Italy, and the moneys loaned were expended in manufacturing munitions, and in purchasing food and clothing for those countries. Shops that had manufactured machines for domestic use were hastily turned into muni-

tion factories and very soon employment was given to every man who would work. In Detroit, old factories that had long been idle were opened for this new work, and soon everyone was employed. Skilled labor was in great demand and, in Detroit, became scarce.

Thousands flocked to Detroit from all over the world, for wages were excessive and the demand could not be supplied. Young farmers and persons living in the small cities and villages came, leaving farm houses empty and villages partly deserted.

The population increased so rapidly that houses could not be built fast enough to accommodate them. More than \$50,000,000 was expended in building in the city in 1916. Flats and apartment houses were filled to overflowing, and many people found homes outside the city in Birmingham, Royal Oak, Wyandotte and the surrounding country. Temporary tents were erected where many families lived during the warm weather, hoping to find better quarters for the winter. This is the situation of Detroit at the present time. What will happen when the war ends, no one can foretell.

January, 1917.

## **HISTORY OF DETROIT, 1780 to 1850.**

### **Financial and Economical.**

The real estate dealers have for the past ten years enjoyed a great business in our city. We estimate the sales in millions of dollars, but in proportion to the size and value of the place, the transfers are not as large as they have been on some previous occasions.

Periods of inflated values and of depression follow each other at intervals of about 10 years. That is, when a period of inflation has reached its limit, there follows about 10 years of slow decline in the market, and then the bottom is reached and the ascent begins, so that it takes about twenty years to complete the cycle.

Looking back over the history of Detroit we find that this climax of prosperity was reached in the years 1780, 1798, 1819, 1836, 1856, 1873 and 1893.

#### **FIRST BOOM IN 1780**

The earliest record we have of a local boom in real estate was in the year 1780. The war of the American revolution was in progress. Detroit was the distributing point for the goods to the Indians in the west. Here, at that time, was a large garrison in the new fort. The fort was built partly to protect Detroit from an anticipated American invasion from the south, and partly to care for the great number of prisoners brought up from the Ohio and Pennsylvania regions. The British government was sending here great quantities of goods and money to maintain the place and keep the

Indians friendly, and that money was flowing into the hands of our merchants. The more important firms were James Abbott & Co.; Thomas Finchley; Graverat & Visger; Macomb, Edgar & Macomb; Thomas Williams; John Askin; Alexander Dyce; Sampson Fleming; James Sterling, and William Sterling. Some of these men became quite wealthy.

In the year 1780 both the American colonies and Great Britain were exhausted by the long struggle, and were willing to give up and quit fighting if some way could be pointed out to honorably end the conflict. It was generally understood, at that time, that the United States would soon be independent. It was also generally conceded by those who watched affairs in the west, that Michigan, and possibly all of Canada, would form a part of the independent United States. With such a change of government and with anticipations that prosperity would come, as it never before came to Detroit, the values of real estate rose and transfers were made in great number and at ever increasing prices.

#### ONLY SMALL TERRITORY IN THE VILLAGE

Understand that the entire village of Detroit, at that time, was confined within the narrow limits of a picket line, or palisade, bounded on the east by the present Griswold street, on the west by Wayne street and extending from the river at Woodbridge street to the Chemin de Ronde, or road around the village inside the picket line, at about Larned street.

All of Detroit was huddled into this little place. The soldiers were in the fort on top of the hill, where the



postoffice now stands, and the prisoners of war, when in confinement, were in the citadel, on the west side of the village, near the present corner of Cass and Jefferson avenues.

There were at times as many as 500 prisoners here.

A short abstract of the transfers of village lots in the year 1780 indicates how large the business was, much larger in proportion than it has been in any subsequent year.

Feb. 11, 1780, Madelaine Chevalier, widow of Jacques Dumay, sold to Alexis Campau a farm on the southwest side of Detroit. This is probably private claim 78, the Alexis Campau farm at Twenty-fourth street, consideration, 7,000 livres, equal to £1,300 6s 8d, current money of the post, about \$3,250.

March 2, 1780, Benjamin Chapin sold to Antoine Soumade, a farm three arpents front, on the south side of the river, for 2,000 livres, "ancient shillings of the province of Quebec."

Dec. 10, 1779, (deed recorded in 1780), Pierre Drouillard sold to King George III, for £150, New York currency, "a lot of ground lying without the fort, containing half an arpent in front along the highway, and an arpent in depth, bounded on the east, northeast, by Simon Gendron, alias Poitvins' lot; on the west, southwest, by the king's domain and the lands of John Askin." This lot was near the intersection of the present Randolph and Atwater streets probably a residence for Capt. Richard Beringer Lernoult, of the King's or Eighth, regiment. It was Lernoult who built the fort which, at that time, bore his name.

March 17, 1780, Samuel Dollwood, a soldier in the Eighth Regiment, for £150, New York currency, sold to Richard Cornwall, shipwright, a lot within the fort, 48 feet wide and 57 feet deep (French measure), bounded in front by St. Joseph street, and in rear by the Chemin de Ronde, on the west by Joseph St. Marie's house and lot, and on the east, northeast, by the lot belonging to William Edgar.

March 20, 1780, Jacques Peltier sold to Antoine Robert, Jr., a farm three arpents in width by 40 arpents in depth, on the south side of the Detroit river, for 3,660 livres, equal to £244, New York currency.

March 22, 1780, Francois Billet, mason, sold to Joseph Greenwood, sergeant in the Forty-seventh regiment, for £221 N. Y. C., a lot within the fort of Detroit, 34 feet in width, by 58 feet in depth, bounded in front by St. Jacques street, in rear by the Chemin de Ronde, on the east by Charles Lafleur's house and on the west by Isaac Gagnier's house.

April 27, 1780, Collin Andrews acting as attorney for Daniel Campbell, of Schenectady, N. Y., sold to Charles and Antoine Campau, brothers, a farm on the Detroit River, between the land of James Cassidy and the farm of Capt. George McDougall, for 5,000 livres equal to £200 pounds N. Y. C.

April 29, 1780, Charles and Gabriel St. Aubin sold to Louis and Joseph Tremblay, a farm three arpents wide by 40 in depth, on the Detroit River, between the farms of said Joseph Tremblay and that of Jacques D——(?) with a mill and other buildings, for 13,500 livres, equal to £900 N. Y. C.

May 18, 1780, Margaret Cassety, with the consent of her son Thomas, sold to Julien Parent, a farm three

arpents wide and 40 arpents in depth, fronting on the Detroit River, between the farms of Martin Leviel and that of George Mc Dougall, for 3,500 livres, equal to £223 6s 8d, N. Y. C.

May 21, 1780, Thomas Williams sold to Alexander and William Macomb, a lot in the village 46 feet front on St. Louis street and 63 feet deep (French measure), bounded on the southwest by Thomas Cox house, on the northeast by St. Antoine street, and in the rear by Francois and Michel Catten's house, for £500, N. Y. C.

May 21 1780, Edgar and McPherson sold to Thomas Reynolds, a lot in the fort of Detroit, 42 feet front on St. Louis street, bounded on the northeast by the late George McDougall's lot, on the west by a small street without a name, and in rear by vacant ground, for £500, N. Y. C.

June 2, 1780, Madam Le Sage Chatelain sold to Henry Duvernet, lieutenant in the royal artillery, a house and lot in Detroit on St. Joseph street, eight feet wide and 50 feet deep, adjoining land of the purchaser, for £20, N. Y. C.

July 6, 1780, Gregor McGregor sold to Norman McLeod and John McNamara, a lot in the village 42 feet wide on St. Ann street, and 48 feet on St. Louis street, bounded on the east by a lot of John Campbell and on the west by a small street without a name, for £200, N. Y. C. Gregor Mc Gregor was a Scotchman, born in 1747, and died in Sandwich Nov. 30, 1810. He was sheriff of the Western District of Upper Canada, which included Detroit.

July 6, 1780, Norman McLeod and John McNamara sold the same property to John Mc Pherson for £100. This was probably a mortgage.

July 11, 1780, Alexander Grant sold to Richard Cornwall for £210, N. Y. C., a lot in the fort 120 feet long, whereof 90 feet is 24 feet in width and the remaining 30 feet is 40 feet wide, fronting on St. Louis street, and bounded in rear by unlocated lands, on the east by Thomas Cox's lot and on the west by St. Peter's street.

July 11, 1780, Richard Cornwall sold the same parcel to Thomas Cox for £310, N. Y. C.

July 13, 1780, Forsyth & Dyce, merchants, sold to Isaac Williams, a lot in the fort, 46 feet wide by 45 feet in depth, fronting on Ste. Anne street and extending to St. James street, bounded on the east by the lot of Edward Ridly and on the west by the lot of St. Martin, for £520, N. Y. C.

July 14, 1780, Sarah Willcox, wife of James Willcox, sergeant in the Forty-seventh regiment, sold to Antoine Bernard, alias Lafontaine, for £250, N. Y. C., a lot in the village, 42 feet square, bounded by St. Honore street, on the east by lot formerly owned by Charles Moran and on the west by the Chemin de Ronde.

July 14, 1780, Isaac Williams sold to Nathan Williams, for £380, N. Y. C., a lot in the fort, 45 feet wide on Ste. Anne street, extending to St. Louis street, and 42 feet deep, bounded east by the house and lot of James Abbott & Co., and on the west by the house and lot of Chapman Abraham.

July 14, 1780, Nathan Williams sold to William Brown, for £900, N. Y. C., a lot and tenement 46 feet wide on Ste. Anne street, by 49 feet in depth extending to St. Louis street, bounded east by the house and lot of Sanschagrin, baker, and on the west by the house and lot of Graverat & Visger.

July 15, 1780, William Brown sold to John Cornwall and William Miller, for £700, N. Y. C., a parcel of land 40 feet wide on St. Joseph street, by 120 feet in depth, bounded on the northeast by Gobbiel's house and lot, on the west by Philip Belanger's house and lot, and in the rear by the Chemin de Ronde.

July 15, 1780, William Brown sold to William Edgar for £630, N. Y. C., a lot in the fort, bounded in front by Ste. Anne street, in rear by St. Louis street, on the east by the house and lot of Jean Baptiste Duberge and on the west by Graverat and Visger's house and lot, being 46 feet front and 49 feet deep.

July 17, 1780, Antoine Bernard, alias Lafontaine, sold to Ridley & Bennet for £152, N. Y. C., a lot fronting on St. Honore street, bounded on the east by ground formerly belonging to Charles Moran and on the west by the Chemin de Ronde, being 40 feet square.

Sampson Fleming sold to Alexander and William Macomb for £700, N. Y. C., two houses on Ste. Anne street, next to a lot belonging to the king, now in possession of said Macombs and next to the new St. Germain street; bounded in rear by St. James street, being 30 feet front by 64 feet deep. The other lot is between St. James and Ste. Anne streets next to the house of Lawrence Parent and on St. Germain street, being 30x65 feet. St. Germain street is sometimes called Rencontre street and is laid down on the map as Lernoult street.

Sept. 7, 1780, Isaac Gagnier sold to Walter Hume, a lot 38 feet front on St. Joseph street, between Sergt. Greenwood's house and Henry Devereux' house, for £110, N. Y. C.

Nov. 1, 1780, Isaac Williams sold a parcel of land, nine arpents by 150 arpents, equal to 1,350 arpents or acres, to Pierre Drouillard for £100 N. Y. C. Pierre Drouillard was interpreter for the King, in many Indian languages. He was the son of Jean Drouillard. He married Angelique Descomps dit Labadie, Nov. 20, 1776. They had six children. He died April 14, 1803, at the age of sixty years.

#### LARGE SALE OF FARMS

The sales of village lots were small transactions compared with the sale of farm lands by the Indians. There were several large tribes owning, or claiming to own, the lands on the River Rouge, Detroit river, Lake St. Clair and the River St. Clair. The white inhabitants, both English and French, seeing that a change of government would soon take place, attempted to obtain from the Indians their titles to these lands. Thousands and thousands of acres were conveyed by the savages to their white friends. The record book of the year 1780 is well filled with the deeds that were then obtained and recorded, and there were many conveyances left unrecorded at that time that have since come to light. These deeds conveyed—or pretended to convey—anywhere from 240 arpents to 20,000 acres.

The French arpent is a little smaller than the English acre.

No consideration is expressed in the deeds other than the love and affection which the Indian chiefs bore to their white friends. The chiefs alone claimed the right to these lands, but, on one occasion at least, the entire tribe was called into council to give its consent to a sale.

## BUYS BELLE ISLE

George Mc Dougall married Marie, the daughter of the royal notary, Robert Navarre. Through the influence of the notary, Mc Dougall obtained the Indian title to Belle Isle (then called Ile au Cochon, Hog Island). The citizens of Detroit claimed that the island was public property and that the Indians did not own it or have any right to convey it. Mc Dougall's claim was submitted to the privy council of Great Britain and was allowed on condition that he would obtain the consent of the entire Indian tribe. He called the entire tribe into council and purchased its rights. He then obtained a deed from the chiefs. The island was, however, claimed as belonging to the crown and Mc Dougall was allowed to occupy it only so long as the government did not require it. The island was subsequently taken by the commandant and the improvements placed on it by Mc Dougall were appraised and paid for.

It would be too long a record to include a description of all of the lands that were bought in 1780, and the name of the purchasers only will be given:

Duperon Baby,

Thomas Hemar,

Alexander Macomb, father of Gen. Alexander Macomb,

William Macomb, brother of Alexander Macomb.  
(He died in 1796, leaving a large family—his three sons were William, David and John).

Alexis Delisle,

Thomas Williams, father of John R. Williams, first elected mayor of Detroit;

Antoine Chene, Sr.,  
Pierre Chene,  
James Rankin,  
Fontonay Dequindre,  
Jean Bte. Cicot,  
Nicolas Lasselle,  
Alexis Labadie,  
Chevalier Chabert (de Joncaire),  
Hyacinthe Lasselle,  
Isadore Chene,  
Antoine Catlin,  
Meni Chene,  
Bernard Campau,  
Charles Chene, Jr.,  
Jacques Godfroy,

James Abbott, father of James Abbott, who resided where the Hammond building now stands;

Isaac Williams,

Sampson Fleming, married Alice Haliburton, half-sister of John Kinzie (many of their descendants became prominent in New York City);

Arent Schuyler De Peyster, major in the king's regiment, born in New York, died in Scotland (was the author of "Memoirs of an Officer");

Thomas Cox,  
Porlier Benac,  
Joseph Bourdeaux,  
Jacques Portier,  
Pierre Labadie,  
Henry Tucker,  
Claude Solant,  
Baptiste Sanscraint,



Charles Cabacier owned the Thompson farm at the present Twelfth street.

Isidore Bienvenue,

William Tucker,

Joseph P. Benac,

William Forsyth, a soldier in Wolfe's army, was wounded in the battle on the heights of Abraham. His wife was Ann Haliburton Kinzie, mother of Alice Haliburton and John Kinzie. They had six sons. Maj. Robert A. Forsyth, of Detroit, was a grandson.

William Groesbeck,

John Visger,

Garret Filler,

Alexander Dyce,

David Button,

John McGill,

George McBeath,

Robert McWilliams,

Sarah Ainse, (half-breed Indian);

James Thompson,

Margaret Cox,

William Dawson,

Jean Bte. Chapeton,

Alexis Chapoton,

Charles Gouin,

Richard Cornwall,

Alexander Grant, commodore of the lakes, and

Rev. Fr. Pierre Potier, S. J., in charge of the Huron church, on the south side of the river.

During the latter half of the year 1780 only two or three sales of village property are noted. In the following year there were many transfers of lands made by the Indians, but as it was discovered that the sav-

ages sold the same lands two or three times over to different parties, no credit was given to their deeds and they soon ceased to be placed upon record.

By the year 1783 the times had fallen on evil ways. The end of the war came. Great Britain ceased to send money or goods here for the Indians. The garrison was reduced. The fort was allowed to fall into ruins. Public property was not maintained or repaired. The palisade around the village had become so dilapidated that the Indians could push the pickets apart and squeeze between them and so enter the town. Those citizens who favored the new government, like the Flemings, Sterlings, Edgars and Scheffelins, left for New York or remained here only in anticipation of the coming of the Americans. England refused to give up the post to the Americans and everybody—both American and British adherents—were uneasy and disappointed. The times got worse and worse.

It was not until 1796, two years after Jay's treaty was signed, that the Americans came, under Gen. Anthony Wayne, and occupied the place. A few discontented Englishmen moved across the river, so as to remain under the British flag, but the great influx of newcomers more than made up this loss. Business began to increase and in a few years everything was exceedingly prosperous. Again the real estate dealer was the important man in the community. Within the village there were many sales, but as the boundary lines had not been changed, and the quantity of land was very limited, the sales were not as numerous as were the transfers of farm lands. It was expected that the new government would soon take active measures to confirm the titles to the farms, and many sales that

were made, were to actual settlers on the river front. These lands extended along the river from Port Huron to the Maumee river and there was soon not an unoccupied farm within that district.

#### PETER AUDRAIN, FIRST REGISTRAR

The office of registry of deeds was opened shortly after the transfer of government to the Americans in 1796 and Peter Audrain was appointed the first register. Audrain, as his name indicates, was a Frenchman. He was well educated in English as well as French, and was a fine penman. He held almost all the clerical offices of his time. He was prothonotary, judge of probate, justice of the peace, register of probate and of deeds, clerk of the courts and kept all the records that we have. Some of his records, though written with a quill, are as regular as copper plate and quite as legible. Born in France, he took the oath of allegiance to the United States Oct. 2, 1781. He lived for a time in Pittsburgh. We first find him employed in America in taking the testimony in the investigations concerning the "Whisky War" in Pennsylvania.

He came to Detroit with Gen. Wayne in 1796 and the journal of his journey has been printed in the State Pioneer and Historical society proceedings. He died in Detroit Oct. 6, 1820, at the age of 95 years. His wife was named Margaret Moore. Of course, little appears in the records to indicate a man's private character, but among the old papers I have been examining in connection herewith, I found a letter which gives a bit of gossip of the times, and an extract will show a little

of the character of Pierre Audrain. The letter is dated at Detroit, March 14, 1801. It reads as follows:

“The day before the writ (of restitution) was issued Mother Audrian being prompted, I presume, by malice at the loss of the farm, caused one dwelling house, and the only one worth a farthing, to be torn to pieces and the stable floors to be taken up and the materials transported over the creek upon Baby’s land; therefore any compromise with Audrian is out of the question. I have threatened Audrian with an action, but the poor henpecked fellow declares that it was done without his knowledge and against his will.

“ ’Tis his poverty alone which can plead an excuse.”

#### AUDRAIN FAMILY

Peter (Pierre) Audrain married Margaret Moore. Their children were:

James H. Audrain, born in Bucks Co., Pa., Dec. 29, 1781.

Elizabeth (Rebecca) born in same place, Nov. 14, 1783; married Robert Abbott, 24 May, 1798. She died 24 March, 1858. He died at Coldwater in 1853.

Maria Caroline, born in same place, Sept. 24, 1785.

Peter Duponce Audrain, born in Pittsburgh, Nov. 24, 1787.

Margaret, born in same place, Jany. 24, 1790, married George Hoffman. He died in 1810, and she subsequently married William Mc Carty.

Francois Audrain, born in same place, Nov. 10, 1791.

Fanny Audrain, born in same place, July 13, 1793,

married Lieut. Edmonson. They moved to Nashville, Tenn.

Peter Audrain, born in same place, April 13, 1795, married Ann May, daughter of Judge James May, 3 August, 1824. He died 16 June, 1838.

St. Clair Audrain, born in Detroit, May 6 (year omitted).

#### FEW TRANSFERS IN 1796

There were very few transfers recorded in 1796—only 10 in fact, but commencing with 1797 we find the number increasing rapidly. There were 188 transfers in that year. The following names are noted among the land owners:

Peter Audrain,

David Powers; came from Tioga county, New York, to practice law.

The sons of William Forsyth were already here when the Americans came. They were William; James, John, George, Thomas and Robert A. Forsyth, and their half-brother was John Kinzie, "the first white man in Chicago except a darkie." There was also a half sister Alice Haliburton who married Sampson Fleming.

Walter Roe was also here. He practiced law and lived on the south side of the river, though at one time he owned a lot in the village. Later in life he became dissipated and fell into the river and was drowned.

Herman Eberts, a physician, was sheriff. His descendants are among the business men of Detroit to-day.

John Sparkman,  
Robert Gouie,

William Harffy owned a parcel of land that had been given him by Maj. Arent Schuyler De Peyster, the British commandant, during the last year of the war.

Then there was Jonathan Scheffelin, whose Indian name was Ottason. The Scheffelins moved to New York and founded the great drug house that has borne their name for more than a century.

Alexander Henry never lived in Detroit but was a frequent visitor here with his friend, John Askin. He was a large land owner here. In 1795 and 1796 Henry and the two John Askins, father and son, and a few others, engaged extensively in buying land from the Indians. They obtained a deed conveying land near Adam Brown's village (Brownstown) at Grosse Roche, 40 French leagues or 120 miles in depth, by six miles wide, on the Detroit river. Imagine such a farm, 460,800 acres!

1795

## TRIED TO BUY THE LOWER PENINSULA

A chapter in the history of Michigan of great interest to the student, has been passed over with slight reference or complete silence by nearly all of our historians—an attempt, at an early date, to appropriate to the private ownership of a few individuals, the entire country we now call the lower peninsula of Michigan and the northern portion of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. The original French inhabitants of America did not undertake to subdue to private ownership more land than each proprietor could actually take charge of and use for his private benefit. There were no large tracts granted to individuals or companies. Associations were formed to whom sections of the country were granted for the purposes of hunting and fur gathering, but these companies did not claim to be owners of the soil, and, further than striving to keep out other hunters, the lands were left to the control of the Indian occupants.

After the fall of New France and after the country came under the British control, companies and syndicates were formed to take possession of large tracts with the intent to divide them into small parcels and sell them to colonies and individuals.

Shortly after 1760, the Ohio River Company was formed to take the territory south of the Ohio River and divide it up and so dispose of it, and later on, and during the revolution, we find a plan for dividing 20,000,000 acres, at the intersection of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, into parcels, and selling the parcels.

under the lottery scheme, the avails to go to the government to assist in carrying on the war.

When the war was ended and people began to crowd west along the Ohio valley there were several grants of very large tracts made to companies in the Northwest Territory, and the ordinance of 1787 was gotten up, in part, to protect these grants.

In New York, also, we find these large grants occasionally made; the government selling a large tract to some individual or company and the individual selling to the smaller holders; thus relieving the government of the detail of looking after the small sales, and leaving private enterprise to found colonies, build towns and people the country.

The territory we now know as Michigan formed a part of Canada, and although Great Britain agreed to surrender it to the United States by the Treaty of 1783, she clung to it as a rich possession and refused to permit our government to have it until the summer of 1796.

It appears from contemporary correspondence between the Canadian officials and the Home government that the chief value of the country to the English at this time was the fact that it was the entrance to the western fur country and that if Canada lost possession of it, the fur trade would be diverted from Montreal and Quebec and would go south through the states.

Jay's Treaty of 1794, effectually settled the right to the country in our government, and the year 1796, was designated as the time for the surrender of all the posts. Detroit was the most important post thus to be given up.



Until the year 1760 there were no people in the Detroit district other than the French and Indians, but after it became a British possession the English, Scotch and Irish traders arrived in great numbers and, by their greater business activity and enterprise, drove the French from the occupation of traders to that of farmers and hunters.

It is stated that in the year 1767, only seven years after the advent of the English, there were only ten French families still remaining within the enclosure of Detroit. The village increased in size, wealth and importance, but its new inhabitants were not French.

The Canadian French were never very strongly attached to Great Britain and during the Revolution, although they remained outwardly as neutral as circumstances would permit, their sympathies were clearly with the Americans, and upon the consummation of Jay's Treaty, they almost unanimously decided to become citizens of the United States.

The British inhabitants were imbued with a different spirit, and although very many of them remained subject to the American flag many others chose to remain subjects of Great Britain and either removed from Detroit or lived here as subjects of a foreign nation.

After the final execution of Jay's Treaty, but before it had gone into effect, a number of the traders residing at Detroit conceived the scheme of obtaining a grant from the United States of twenty millions of acres of land forming the entire lower peninsula of Michigan and the Northern parts of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

They did not expect to pay for this land anything like its actual value, but undertook to obtain the title by wholesale bribery and the payment of a few dollars

in money and a few promises of removing or quieting the Indian inhabitants. The Detroit traders actively engaged in the enterprise were John Askin, John Askin, Jr., Richard Pattinson, Robert Innis, William Robertson, David Robertson and Jonathan Schieffelin.

It is impossible to tell whether these men were actual participants in the bribery scheme, but they were largely interested, and their partners were the persons engaged in the job at Philadelphia, then the seat of government.

In the spring and summer of 1795 a certain doctor Robert Randall, of Philadelphia, visited Detroit and got the persons above named interested in the matter. An agreement was drawn up and signed by them all.

As this document has but recently (1914) been found, the entire paper will be given rather than an extract from it.

#### COPY OF THE ORIGINAL AGREEMENT FOR THE PURCHASE OF MICHIGAN

“Articles of Agreement entered into and concluded at Detroit this Twenty-sixth day of September, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety-five For the purpose of obtaining the Pre-emption right from the United States of America and extinguishing the right of the Native Indians to a certain Territory hereinafter defined, between Ebenezer Allen and Charles Whitney of the State of Vermont and Robert Randall of the City of Philadelphia on one part, and John Askin, Jonathan Schieffelin, William Robertson, John Askin, Jr., David Robertson, Robert Innis and Richard Pattinson, all of Detroit on the other part.

“The said Territory is situated on the lakes Erie, Huron and Michigan, bounded by a Line commencing at the Miamis Village, thence down the River of that name till it falls into Lake Erie, thence along the said lake up the channel of the River of Detroit through Lake St. Clair up the Channel of the River St. Clair, thence along Lake Huron to Old Michilimackinac and thence along Lake Michigan on a southwesterly direction to Chicagou, thence across the Portage there, and down the Illinois River, till a Line drawn due East from the said River strikes the Miamis Village aforesaid, comprehending all the Lands, Islands and Waters within the said Boundary line.

“Article 1st. The said Territory shall be divided into Forty-one equal Shares, whereof the said Allen, Whitney and Randall shall hold Thirty-six shares for themselves and their associates in consideration of their obtaining thro’ the Interest of Themselves and the Influence of their connexions, the Right of Pre-emption to the said Territory on the most advantageous and moderate terms from the United States, and the said John Askin, Jon<sup>n</sup> Schieffelin, William Robertson, John Askin, Junr., shall each hold one share and the remaining share shall be held by David Robertson, Robert Innis and Richard Pattinson in equal proportions in consideration on their part of the influence they have over the Indian tribes, who are the Native proprietors of the said Territory, and over those connected with them, which influence they bind and oblige themselves to exert in that manner that they most effectually extinguish the Indian Right on the most reasonable and least expensive terms, and at the same time tend to ensure to the settler peacable possession, and unmolested

enjoyment: All this to be done at the general expence of the Forty-one Shares.

“Article IIId. Each holder of a Share is bound to pay his quota of the sum that may be Covenanted for with the United States according to the terms thereof as the price of the pre-emption right to the said Territory, and also the Fees of Office, if any, but no other expences or charges whatever.

“Article IIIId. Should any of the Parties to this Agreement residing at Detroit, be unable to pay or think the price given or agreed to be given to the United States too high, He may upon declaring the same in writing to the proper Parties, Resign and be as effectually exonerated from every part of this Agreement as if it had never been; and such share so relinquished becomes the general property of the United Associates, or Parties, and must be accordingly at their disposal.

“Article IVth. Each Party has free and entire right to dispose of his Share, of which however he is bound to give the refusal to the General Association should they choose to purchase it, but should such person be one of those whose influence and knowledge of the Indians and Their connexions, is deemed essential to the promotion of the general views and Interest of the Association He cannot divest himself of such share, till the Indian Rights are extinguished agreeable to the Intent and meaning of the first Article.

“Article Vth. It is fully understood that all expences and charges whatever—that may be incurred in extinguishing the Indian Right or Title to the said Territory, shall be borne by the Forty-one Shares respectively, but as it may be found particularly necessary for the general association, that some of those

Gentlemen residing at Detroit whose long habits of intimacy with the Indian Chiefs and Tribes, with their Families and Connexions, whose knowledge of their language as well as acquaintance with the Situation of the said Territory should devote their time to this business—for the purpose of making the purchase from the Natives, as well as to accompany those who may be appointed to see that the Transaction is fair towards the Indians, and satisfactory to the Association as also to accompany and protect the Surveyors, or others, whose business it may be to lay out, or examine the lands, such Persons are bound and obliged to perform such Services upon being allowed a proper Compensation from the Company or Association for so doing.

“Article VIth. As Certain Tracts within the said Limits have been already Conceded by the Indians to John Askin and Jonathan Schieffelin and their Associates and of course the Indian Titles to such Tracts—Extinguished, no steps they may have or shall hereafter take to obtain for such Tracts the Right and Claim of the United States in their behalf shall be deemed an Infringement of anything herein contained. It is in the mean time however agreed, and understood, That for such Tracts as the Indians shall acknowledge to have divested themselves of, in favor of said John Askin and Jonathan Schieffelin and Their Associates, the said Association of Forty-one shall make them a fair and equitable compensation in proportion to the limits and extent so extinguished.

“The Parties at Detroit declare and They wish to be fully understood by all the World, That as far as they are, or may be concerned in this business, they will on no account whatever be instrumental in taking

any advantage or any steps that could deprive Their neighbours and friends the Indians, who in the eye of Nature and Reason, must ever be considered as the sole proprietors of these Lands, of any Comfort or means of enjoyment they have heretofore possessed—That on the contrary it is their Intention at once to conciliate their affection and promote their Comfort, connecting with these the gradual and peaceable Settlement the Territory in question, The extension of Trade and Agriculture, without Outrage, Bloodshed, or depredation on the part of the Natives.

“Article VIIth. If the said Allen, Whitney and Randall and Their Associates shall not have obtained the pre-emption Right from the United States in three months after the expiration of the second Session of Congress counting from the day of the date hereof then this Agreement to be null and void.

“The above Agreement is reciprocally binding on all and every one of the contracting parties according to the true Intent and meaning thereof, which Intent and meaning is to be explained without Equivocation or Strained Interpretation, according to the usual sense and acceptation of the words; And in failure of any part (*torn*) the Party so failing, shall forfeit his Share of (*torn*) advances (*torn*) or disbursements as effectually as if he had never entered into the (*torn*).

“In Witness Whereof, We the said (*torn*) set Our hands, and Affixed Our Seals to four (*torn*). Same Tenor and date, at Detroit the day and (*torn*).

EB’N ALLEN & Associates. (L. S.)

CHARLES WHITNEY & Associates. (L. S.)

R. RANDALL for Self & Associates. (L. S.)

JOHN ASKIN. (X)

J. SCHIEFFELIN.	(X)
for John Askin Jr., John Askin.	(X)
WILLIAM ROBERTSON.	(X)
DAVID ROBERTSON.	(X)
ROBERT INNIS.	(X)
for Richard Pattinson,	(X)
J. SCHIEFFELIN.	

Signed and Sealed

in presence of

HUGH PATTINSON.

ROB NICHOL."

It was proposed to offer five thousand dollars for the tract and it was thought that this money could be derived from the thirty-six shares, most of it by a sale of the twelve shares with some slight contribution from the members to whom the twenty-four shares were given.

The members of Congress who did not participate in the profits, were to be led to believe that the removal or quieting of the Indians was a sufficient payment for the land.

After leaving Detroit, Randall proceeded to Vermont and interested in his behalf Charles Whitney, Col. Ebenezer Allen and Col. Pepune of Vermont, and Israel Jones of Adams, Massachusetts.

Whitney is the only man besides Randall, who seems to have taken an active part in the affair. Before Congress assembled in the fall, many of the members had been seen, either by Whitney or Randall, and urged to vote for the proposed bill.

On the 28th of December, 1795, William Smith, member of Congress from South Carolina, and chairman

of the Committee for bringing in the land office bill, rose in his seat in the house and after stating that he understood a memorial would that day be presented asking for a grant of all land lying between Lakes Erie, Huron and Michigan, to the amount of twenty millions of acres, he disclosed the formation of the scheme and the attempt of Robert Randall to bribe himself, and perhaps other members, to vote for the grant. He explained the inducements that were held out to him, which were that the Detroit parties, who were Canadian merchants of great influence over the Indians, would extinguish the Indian title. The property would then be divided into forty-one shares, twenty-four of which would go to members of Congress favoring the scheme; twelve of the shares would go to the southern members and twelve to the eastern, some shares would go to the Canadian merchants "who had an unbounded influence over the Indians occupying those lands, and would, if this plan succeeded, pacify those Indians who were the most hostile to the United States.

"Wayne's Treaty was a mere delusion, and without the co-operation of those influential persons the United States will never have peace in that quarter." Mr. Murray from Maryland and Mr. Giles from Virginia immediately disclosed like infamous proposals that had been made to them by Randall. One of the inducements held out by Randall was that the transfer of this country to an association of the United States would change the course of the fur trade through the States. He told Giles that he could see no impropriety in a member of Congress being concerned in the scheme if the public good was to be promoted by it and thirty or forty members were already engaged in its support. Mr. Buck of Vermont, said that he believed Mr. Charles



Whitney was equally guilty with Randall, as Whitney had made similar proposals to him.

The speaker directed the sergeant-at-arms to take Randall and Whitney into custody and bring them before the bar of the House on the succeeding day. No other conspirators were arrested.

The examination and debates on the subject occupied the almost exclusive attention of Congress from December 28, 1795, to January 13, 1796.

Of the eighty printed pages of the records of the house in that period, five are taken up with the subject of the presentation of a flag by the French government, and the remainder are almost exclusively devoted to the subject of Randall and Whitney.

It is very evident to one who carefully reads the motions and debates that many members were implicated in the scandal and undertook to stifle it there, without permitting a thorough investigation. Among the members who were approached by Randall and Whitney and who disclosed the matter in the house were William B. Giles of Virginia, Gabriel Christie of Maryland, Daniel Buck of Vermont, Theodore Sedgwick of Massachusetts and James Madison of Virginia. The entire investigation is a good illustration of Dickens' circumlocution office, "How not to do it."

Each member was manifestly afraid lest some one should think that one of his colleagues might be guilty. Mr. Murray said that "so rapid were the communications of the press, so keen the appetite for scandal, that when once the story was circulated, it might be impossible to get rid of it."

In the course of protracted debates on the subject it was determined that the house had no authority or machinery to adequately punish the offence and it would be well to let the courts take the matter in hand. So Randall and Whitney were placed under arrest on a warrant stated to be issued from the District Court at the request of President Washington. In the examination farce that took place before the bar of the House the prisoners were represented by two prominent Philadelphia attorneys, Mr. Lewis and Mr. Tilghman. Every question put to the prisoners had first to be presented to the speaker and, by him submitted to the House and if considered proper was then required to be answered. By this proceeding members were able to prevent any unfortunate disclosures being made, and when Mr. Blount proposed to ask the prisoners the names of the members who were secured to vote for the grant, he was compelled to modify his interrogatory and strike out the objectional passage, lest the answer to it bring forth an accusation.

Whitney acknowledged making the alleged proposals but denied any wrong intention. Randall denied the use of language imputed to him in making the proposals, but acknowledged generally the fact of the proposals, though denying any corrupt intentions. His attorney (Lewis) in his closing argument before the House, ridiculed the idea of any intention to bribe the members and said "if the gentlemen to whom this application was made had *KICKED MY CLIENT OUT OF THE ROOM* they would have served him right, and there, I think, the matter ought to have ended."

Randall and Whitney remained in the custody of the Sergeant-at-arms for a few days and were discharged.

Impressed as I was with the belief that the whole investigation was intended to cover up, rather than disclose the facts of the case, I took the opportunity of a visit to Philadelphia to examine the court records in this matter. I rummaged through all the old court files and records in the attic of the magnificent City Hall of Philadelphia, through the Mayor's Court, the Court of Common Pleas, through all the files that existed in 1795.

After a thorough examination here, I went to the United States District Court and obtained access to and examined every paper and record from the commencement of the Court in 1797, civil and criminal, and I found just what I expected, *absolutely nothing*. There is no paper or record in any court showing that such men as Randall and Whitney ever lived, or were ever brought into court. The bribery was so thoroughly spread among the members that they used every effort to keep it from the public records, and by their influence they were nearly successful.

While these proceedings were pending in Congress the Detroit people were not idle.

John Askin and the others obtained several other deeds from the Indians. One deed dated Jan. 18, 1796, conveyed three million acres in the northern part of Ohio extending from the Cuyahoga river (Cleveland) westward to include Sandusky.

## THE DODEMEADS

In the list of the village people at this period we find John Dodemead and his wife, Jane. It would seem that Jane was the better man of the two, for she kept the family in good circumstances during John's life and left a good fortune to a large family at her death. Some may still remember "Aunt Jane Dyson." I remember her well. She was a grand-daughter of John and Jane Dodemead and has told me many times of her grandmother. Aunt Jane was born on the day that Perry achieved his great victory over the British on Lake Erie—Sept. 10, 1813. Her grandmother at that time, and until her death, lived in the old homestead on the southeast corner of Shelby street and Jefferson avenue. The house was built on the brow of the hill—Shelby street was not opened through at that time. Adjoining the house in front and on the east side was a fine orchard of fruit trees. The house that was then on the spot was not the first one built there, for there was another house there before 1805 that was destroyed by the fire of that year.

## PRINCIPAL STREET STE. ANNE

In 1805 the principal street in the town was Ste. Anne street. It was about 15 feet wide and was located nearly in the center of the present Jefferson avenue. The Dodemead house before 1805 fronted on Ste. Anne street and extended southerly some 50 feet to another street called St. Louis street that ran along the brow of the hill.

The house had two entrances, one on each street, and at the St. Louis street entrance there was a saloon which John Dodemead managed. At the Ste. Anne street entrance was the home and tavern of the family, and the upper story was rented for holding the village courts. Some of the soldiers of the garrison were wont to frequent the saloon end of the establishment, much to the annoyance of Maj. Strong, who was in command of the fort. The major issued orders that his soldiers should not visit the place, but they disobeyed him and so, one day, he ordered a soldier sentinel to be stationed at the St. Louis street entrance. Dodemead was angry. So were some of the citizens, for they thought the military department was trying to interfere with their civil rights. Just how to prevent the interruption of business in the saloon was a question. The judges who were holding court complained to Gov. Arthur St. Clair, then at Cincinnati, that they could not hold court under duress and asked that Strong be complained of for interfering with the wheels of justice. There was a good deal of excitement in the little town. The sentinel was taken away but the charges against Maj. Strong were not dropped at that time. He was subsequently removed to some other post and nothing further appears on the matter. The correspondence, which has never been printed, is very interesting. I have selected one letter on the subject:

## A LETTER FROM MAJOR STRONG

Detroit, 24th January, 1799.

Private.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have only time to tell you that I'm in the land of the living, and hope soon to hear from you, and of your welfare and how the business stands between you and that beast who went to endeavour to deprive you of your just rights, etc., etc. Col Shebert, Visger and Wisewell were candidates at the last election. If Shebert is not eligible, of course Wisewell takes the seat. He has thought proper not to go on, and I think he is right, for this reason, if the colonel don't take the seat, of course he comes in, and can go forward the next session.

The devil to pay, and no pitch hot since you took your departure from hence.

I found it necessary to put a stop to the inhabitants selling liquor to the soldiery without permission. I issued an order and made it known to the people within the chain of my sentinels, that any person whatever, without respect to persons, should be tried by a general court-martial, etc., etc. Dodemead and others who have often been guilty of violating similar orders, are, with the assistance of that dam'd Ptr. A-d-n., endeavoring to sour the minds of the people, and I am told that they are writing to the governor, etc. I only wish you to let the old gentleman know what my wishes are in regard to my taking measures to put a stop to drunkenness, which has been the cause of the desertions which have so frequently taken place, owing entirely to those evil-minded persons who are constantly selling liquor to the men. However, I have had no drunken

men since the orders were published. Pray write me, and tell me all that is going on at Cincinnati, and what you may get from other parts of the world. Mrs. S. wishes to be remembered to you. You have the compliments of all the gentlemen of the garrison and town.

God bless you, etc., etc.,

I am, Dear Sir,

With the greatest esteem,

Your humble servant,

DAVID STRONG."

The persons referred to in this letter are, the "beast," George Mc Dougall who was contesting the right of Sibley to a seat in the Assembly; Col. Shebert was Col. Chabert de Joncaire; Visger was Jacob Visger; Wisewell was Oliver Wisewell, a lawyer in Detroit and Ptr. A-d-n. was Peter Audrain. David Strong was lieutenant in the regular army Jan. 1, 1777; Captain in Connecticut Continental Infantry July 15, 1785; Lieutenant Colonel in Second Regiment of Infantry Feb. 19, 1793. Died Aug. 19, 1801.

The name of Dodemead has disappeared from the Detroit records. The information we have regarding the family is as follows:

John Dodemead, died in 1821. His wife, Jane, survived him. Their children were:

Elizabeth (Betsey), married Charles Jouet and died in 1809. They had a daughter Jane who married Samuel Northington.

Robert M. Dodemead, who died in 1828, without issue.

David, who died in 1836, without issue.

Isaac, who died in 1818, without issue.

John, who died in 1813, without issue.

James, who died in 1818, without issue.

Alice, married Dr. Joseph Wilkinson and died in 1853.

Ann, married Capt. Samuel Dyson, and after his death she married Charles Jackson. She left three children, Samuel T. Dyson, Jane M. Dyson and Ann Jackson (who married (1) Leonard B. Watkins and (2) Jonathan Thompson). Ann Jackson died in 1854.

Marie, died in 1821, without issue.

Catherine, married Jacob B. Varnum. They had a son Dr. Peter Varnum.

There are many more names that occur in the list of real estate owners in these years. In 1799 there were 77 conveyances and in 1800 there were only 55.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER WRITTEN AT DETROIT,  
AUG. 7, 1798

“The town of Detroit is situated on the strait connecting lake St. Clair and lake Erie—eighteen miles from the latter. Altho’ the town of Detroit makes but an indifferent appearance, being built without taste or elegance, yet there is a something in its appearance exceedingly pleasing as you approach it. The country on both sides of the Strait as you sail the river, is exceedingly beautiful, equaling any prospect I ever beheld—being one extended village for a distance of 30 miles. But unfortunately for the country the settlers are almost to a man French and exceedingly ignorant and lazy. Fruit of every kind is plenty. Provisions scarce and dear owing wholly to the idleness of the farmers and not, as some have alleged, to the barrenness of the soil. Frenchmen here in cultivating the land make no account of manure, sooner putting it in the river than



on their farms; notwithstanding, they raise from 20 to 25 bushels of wheat from an acre. Many persons have affirmed this country unhealthy, a charge wholly unfounded. The physician of the garrison informs me that during the time the American troops have occupied this post, not one man of them has died of sickness."

#### MANY ADDITIONAL NAMES

We find the following additional names in 1799:

Margaret Wood. She had been in Detroit for some time, and there appears on record the settlement of a suit she had with James Donaldson for servant's wages. He paid her £200 in the settlement.

James Donaldson,

Joseph Cerre dit St. Jean, a tailor. He owned the land we now call the St. Jean farm.

James Henry was a brother of Judge John Joseph Henry, of Lancaster, Pa., whose narrative of the incursion into Canada and the attempt to take Quebec in the revolutionary war is one of the authentic histories of that event.

A hilarious time. That "life was worth living in Detroit," even in the early days, is evident from some of the bills occasionally found. The following is an example:

“James Henry, Esq.

To J. Dodemead,

dr.

To Dinners .....	£ 5: 0: 0
To profit on eight gals. wine .....	3: 4: 0
To one cut decanter broke 24/- .....	1: 4: 0
To one ditto tumbler do 6/- .....	: 6: 0
To 3 ditto glasses do 2/6 .....	: 7: 6

N. Y. C..... 10: 1: 6

By amount of your act. .... 5: 6: 0

Balance due ..... 4:15: 6

Rec'd payment April 14, 1806

J. DODEMEAD.”

#### SOME MORE NAMES

George Cottrell,

Charles Poupard,

George Meldrum, owner of the Meldrum farm, member of the firm of Meldrum & Park.

William Park, a partner of George Meldrum,

Charles Girardin,

Patrick Mc Niff, the surveyor. One of his daughters (Margaret) was the wife of Lieut. Porter Hanks, who was in charge of the fort at Mackinac when the war of 1812 broke out.

James Fraser,

Conrad Seek was a tailor. He was a prisoner among the Indians for some time.

Angus Mackintosh, sometimes referred to as the Earl of Moy. His daughter, Ann, was the wife of Henry

Jackson Hunt, the second mayor of Detroit, and who died in 1826. Another daughter, Catherine (or Kittie) Mackintosh, was for some years connected with St. Luke's Hospital and Church Home.

George Mc Dougall did not live in the city at that time, though he did both before and after that date. He was the great uncle of the late Alexander Macomb Campau.

William Macomb died in 1796 just before the coming of the Americans. Some members of the family were still living here in 1797 and many of the descendants are here today.

Thomas Smith, another old-time surveyor. One of his daughters married John McDonell and many of their descendants are in Detroit at the present time.

Solomon Sibley, a lawyer and later a judge of the United States Court. He was born in Sutton, Mass., and came to Detroit among the very first of Americans. He was a member of the upper house in the assembly of the northwest territory. The meeting of this assembly was held in Cincinnati and in Chillicothe, O. It was largely through the efforts of Judge Sibley that the first charter of Detroit was passed, Jan. 18, 1802, as almost the last act of the last session of the assembly of the territory.

When Judge Sibley returned home from Chillicothe the citizens illuminated their houses, by placing lighted candles in the windows. The freedom of the town was voted to him and a general jubilee welcomed him. He died in 1846. He was the first appointed mayor of Detroit and the second delegate to congress from Michigan territory.

Francois Gaubeille,  
Thomas Reynolds,

Benjamin Huntington moved to New York City and became a prominent business man there.

Robert Reynolds,  
James Mc Danell,  
James Baby,  
James Vincent.

#### ABBOTT IS REMEMBERED

James Abbott, not so long departed but that many of our people remember him. The famous brick dwelling located on the corner of Griswold and Fort streets, was removed only a short time since to make way for the Hammond building. Here Judge Abbott had moved in 1836—as he then said, to be so far removed from the tumult of the city that he could enjoy life. His former home was on the west side of Woodward avenue below Woodbridge street. The center of the city was at the corner of Woodbridge and Randolph streets. Judge Abbott had a large number of beehives about his new residence on Griswold Street, and the neighbors used to complain of them, and even went so far as to complain to the common council.

William Simpson.

John Harvey, owner of the Reeder farm, noted in later years for the famous and long continued law suit, Crane v. Reeder.

Robert Innis. Mr. Innis carried on business in Sandwich and died there.

The following is a very interesting letter showing local incidents of the town in 1799:

“Detroit, 21st Sept., 1799.

Dear Sir—

I embrace this opportunity Pr. Mr. Ruland to drop you a few lines, altho' I have nothing new to communicate. Should Mr. Secretary Harrison come to this place, some of our Judges, on whose abilities I need not expatiate, you being (from experience) sufficiently acquainted therewith, have told me in confidence, that they will in *that case* resign there appointments. This I humbly conceive a fortunate circumstance, the future welfare and happiness of this Country in a great measure depending upon such an event.

Colonel Strong has this day ordered me to hold myself in readiness to proceed to Fort Miamis, and I am to take my departure with the remainder of the Annuities in a few days, although my Brother, and friends at New York and Philadelphia, have advised me in the strongest terms to quit this Country immediately. My duty to my Country, and the promise which I made to my friend General Wilkinson could not justify such a step in these trying times—I have this day, by request of Colonel Strong, sent speeches to the different Nations of Indians requesting their chiefs to attend at the foot of the Miamis Rapids on the 15th of next month for the purpose of receiving their Annuities. Several of the principal Chiefs of the Ottawas, Chippowas and Poutowatamies have been here, on their way to visit his Excellency the Governor, but I took the liberty to advise them to remain here 'till they proceed to the Miamis—conceiving their going forward at this time would be merely importuning his Excellency, particularly as I am informed that either the Governor

or Mr. Secy. Harrison will be at the foot of the Rapids shortly.

The Magistrates have recently received a Packet from the War Office enclosing "*The Articles of War*," the contents of the letter not known—I am surrounded with a number of Chiefs of different Nations, and I cannot see to write any more at present for the intolerable smoke proceeding from their Pipes—I must therefore conclude, wishing you health and happiness—and believe me sincerely your affectionate friend and humble servant,

J. SCHIEFFELIN.

Solomon Sibley, Esq.

P. S. I have enclosed William Pawlings Acct. Current with William St. Clair & Company—with sundry other letters, etc., which will be handed to you by Mr. Ruland.

P. S. Doctor Brown's Compliments—he is too busy to write at present being engaged making l'argent content."

There are many more names, but these will suffice to show that Detroit was growing in population and that the new names were mostly English, Irish and Scotch.

## MORE NEWCOMERS IN 1800

In the list of sales in 1800 we find a few new names and we also find the names of others who have lived in the village for years. Here we have:

Reuben Hunt,  
John Ash,  
Jessie Hunt,  
Abigail Hunt,  
Hugh Callahan,

Oliver Wisewell, a lawyer and candidate for membership in the assembly of the northwest territory.

James May we have spoken of before. He was a judge, trader, tanner and occupied many positions of importance in the place. He was a native of Birmingham, Eng., and was born in 1756. He was present at the capture of Ethan Allen at Montreal, Sept. 25, 1777. May came to Detroit the following year. His son, Samuel, died in Mt. Clemens in 1912. James May married Margaret Labadie Sept. 30, 1797, and Augusta Caroline May, one of his daughters, was the wife of Alexander D. Fraser, the "Nestor of the Detroit bar" for many years.

George Leith,  
William Shepherd,  
Alexander Duff.

Jacob Visger was from Schenectady. He was the father of Joseph Visger and grandfather of James A. Visger, who was deputy register of deeds for some years.

Nathan Williams, who had lived in the village for

some time, died in 1800, leaving a widow, Eleanor, who administered his estate.

Mathias Dolson lived in the Nathan Williams house in the village.

Joseph Voyez, a Frenchman, lived next door.  
James Peltier,  
Stacy Horner,  
Jacob Clemens,  
Thomas Mc Crea,

Hon. Alexander Grant. In those days it was a matter of a good deal of importance to annex the prefix "Honorable" to one's name. No other person in Detroit bore it. Alexander Grant was the "commodore of the lakes" under the British during the revolution. He was always an important man in the British service, and when upper Canada was formed in 1791 he was appointed a member of the council. This was a life position, so that his stay in Detroit at this time was only temporary. He owned a farm in Grosse Pointe and had there built "Grant's castle." He was acting governor of Upper Canada at one time. His wife was a Miss Theresa Barthe, sister of the wife of John Askin. Commodore Grant died in Amherstburg.

But again the overselling had reached a climax, and the down grade began about the year 1801.

We still formed a part of the Northwest Territory, and our first town charter was not granted till a year later. We had many good men in the community who could see a great future for the place, but they were unable to bolster up the falling prices or stem the tide of adversity that was setting in. There were James May, Jacob Visger, Solomon Sibley, James Henry, Elijah



Brush and many others; good business men, who bought and held property at that time, who still held it in the years of depression that followed.

One of the largest land owners of the time was John Askin. He was a British subject, and when the change of government came he wanted to move across the river to enjoy British freedom. He did not move, however, until 1802. He was named as one of the first trustees of the village of Detroit in the charter of 1802; but never served. He owned the land we know as the Brush farm, fronting on the Detroit river at Randolph and Brush streets and extending three miles in depth, nearly to the railroad crossing. When the hard times came he practically failed. He conveyed the Brush farm to his son-in-law, Elijah Brush, and portions of it are still owned by his family.

#### ASKIN OWNED MANY TRACTS

Askin owned many large tracts of land along the river, but was compelled to let most of them go to satisfy his creditors. Among his creditors were James McGill, founder of McGill university, in Montreal; Alexander Henry, the noted traveler, and Isaac Todd, a wealthy Irish landlord. It was to these men that most of his property was conveyed.

A letter written in Detroit, March 12, 1801, indicates the state of business affairs, and shows how sluggish the times were. The writer says:

"I hope that your not receiving the residue of the demand will be no material disappointment to you. It was not in my power to send more, as I could not procure either bank notes or gold. Money of every de-

scription is exceedingly scarce in this place and almost impossible to be obtained on any conditions.” —

There were many events of importance that served both to aid and to injure the village and the country in the first few years of the new century.

The first village charter of Detroit was granted in 1802. The same year Ohio applied for admission into the Union, and on her admission in 1803 Michigan became a part of the territory of Indiana, of which William Henry Harrison was governor.

#### DETROIT COMMONS

An early controversy over the “Commons,” that is the lands lying between Griswold and Brush streets, is discussed in a petition to be presented to Congress.

The petition as drafted is as follows:

“Detroit, Sept. 20, 1803.

There is one further object of consequence more immediately to the Citizens of Detroit, which is the Domain around and back of sd Town—altho’ the Domain was intended by the French Govr. for the use of said Town, and has ever since been enjoyed as such by the Citizens. Yet it is believed that no evidence can be obtained, proving a grant—However we do not believe that the United States will ever attempt to take sd Domain from the said Town, but will suffer it to be enjoyed by the Citizens as it ever has been—Yet Sir, we are desirous and we believe, we are warranted in saying that it is the wish of the Citizens generally that a Law may pass, granting sd Domain to the Inhabitants of sd Town, ever to be occupied as Common by

them, with a clause permitting the Inhabitants of sd Town in their corporate capacity to extend sd Town eastward by laying out parts of said Commons into Lots as shall be considered necessary, and that said Corporation be authorized either to make sale of sd Lots or to Lease them at a long period, reserving certain quit rents, and the proceeds of such Lots, either if sold or rented, to be for the benefit of said Corporation, and be expended either in public improvements, in wharves, streets, etc., that it be appropriated to the purpose of schooling and educating of youths, etc. It is evident that the measure would be greatly to the advantage of this place. At present our Lots are entirely filled up with houses and unless some measures similar to the above lines are adopted, the Town must remain upon its present contracted scale, much to the injury of both the health and happiness of its Citizens.

We have been thus particular in stating our Ideas and wishes respecting this Country, under a full belief that you will interest yourself in its fate, and cannot make any other apology for troubling you with our affairs but the want of some person in Congress whom we might call our immediate Representative, and whose particular business it would be to look to the interest of his constituents.

Wishing you, Sir, compleat success,

we have the honor to be your

most obed. and very hub. sert.

P. S. We shall be happy of appending you every information in our power if you should require it—And to learn often what success attends our petition.”

## SEPARATE TERRITORY

In the early part of 1805 Michigan was formed into a separate territory, with a territorial government consisting of three judges to form the judicial department and a governor with the same three judges to constitute the legislative department. William Hull was the governor and the three judges were Augustus B. Woodward, John Griffin and Frederick Bates.

Just as the four men, the governor and the three judges, were convening in Detroit for the first time, the little village was entirely destroyed by fire, June 11, 1805. At the time this was considered a great misfortune. The inhabitants lost everything. But great good came from the disaster, for a new and larger city was planned on the ruins of the old, and the century that has passed has witnessed the wisdom of the new plan.

We have no means of knowing whether the city retained all of its old inhabitants or not.

The following is a contemporary account of the fire.

“Upon the 11th inst. about half past nine in the evening we were alarmed by the cry of fire. It was discovered in a stable, at the westerly end of the Town, the wind at southwest. Every exertion was made by the Citizens to extinguish the flames, but to no effect. Several of the adjoining buildings being caught in the meantime, which communicated with others adjoining, and in spite of every exertion that could be made, the whole town was on fire in the space of three hours. Much merchandize and other valuable property has been consumed. By this unfortunate event, many

families, but a few moments previous in easy, affluent circumstances, have been reduced to extreme indigence and exposed to the burning rays of the sun. It is impossible to state with accuracy the amount of the loss we have sustained. It is believed that it will exceed One hundred thousand dollars. The loss will prove a serious evil, not only to the individual sufferers, but to the interest of the U. States. Detroit was the only commercial Town belonging to our Govt. in this quarter and unless it can be rebuilt shortly the whole trade will centre in the towns in the british province opposite. We have suffered to that extent, that we have not left sufft. means to rebuild the Town, unless we can receive pecuniary aid from abroad.

We are aware of the uncertainty of this mode of relief, particularly as applying to us, and our situation which can be but imperfectly known in the United States. Yet we trust that every Benevolent Citizen will feel for our distressed situation and contribute a trifle from the abundance of his property for our relief. Whatever the amount, it will be received with gratitude."

## LIMITS EXTENDED

The village limits were extended over the king's commons, from Randolph street to Wayne street, and very soon houses dotted the entire plat. A new picket line, or palisade, was erected around the enlarged village, bounded on the north by Michigan avenue and Michigan Grand avenue (Cadillac square).

The Indians were troublesome and the people were afraid of them and erected the picket line to keep them out.

There was a bank organized in 1806 that issued a great quantity of bills and sent them to Boston to be distributed, probably hoping that few of them would ever reach Detroit for redemption.

The stockholders of the bank were James May, John Griffin, Solomon Sibley, James Henry, Samuel T. Dyson, William Hull, William Brown, Elijah Brush, Richard Pattinson, Robert Abbott, James Abbott, Henry B. Brevoort, William Mc Dowell Scott and Augustus B. Woodward. Judge Woodward was president and William Flanagan was cashier when the bank began business.

The banking house was on the northwest corner of Randolph street and Jefferson avenue. Congress decided that the act of the governor and judges allowing the formation of the bank was illegal and the bank was forced to close its doors. A bank was greatly needed in the place, but it was more than ten years before another one was organized.

## OFFICIALS AND CITIZENS AT WAR

The governor and judges quarreled among themselves and the citizens took sides, so that the community was divided. The place resembled a frontier post of more modern times. Some of the people accused Judge Woodward (the chief justice) of being interested in the scheme of Aaron Burr to establish a new government in the southwest, but the only effect the accusation had on Woodward was to make his enemies hate him worse than ever, while his friends clung the closer to him.

Robert Sanders, a trader in the place, in a letter to his father, John Sanders, at Scotia, near Schenectady, N. Y., March 28, 1807, says:

“Great doubts are entertained as to the charter of our bank’s not being sanctioned by congress. I dare say you have before this seen and read the history of Michigan territory written by some private person (not yet known) residing here and printed by Duane in the Aurora. You will, by reading that, be able to judge of the situation of this country, and the dissatisfaction of the people with the government appointed by congress to govern them. Judge Woodward is despised and hissed at by every person, and I think in some respects merits the treatment he receives, though I must confess the people are not very backward in catching at the least thing that will give them a plausible reason to murmur. We have most every morning papers posted on the corners of the streets scandalizing the governor and judges. The author of them is not known.”

## INDIANS THREATEN

Sanders wrote interesting letters and an extract from another one written to his father, Aug. 11, 1807, contains the following:

“We are at this present time very much alarmed at the movements of the Indians in the Indian country. Information from different quarters has been received by the governor which all agree in stating that the Indians have a line of communication from St. Joseph’s to the Lake of the Woods, and that they have collected in some places in great numbers with intention to strike on some American post or settlement. It is generally believed that their object is this place. We are all employed in picqueting in the town and building block houses for the defense of the town. Should they attack the town I am of opinion it will not be able to hold out but a short time. We have in the post only 80 soldiers, which are not sufficient to man more than half the fort at one time. The inhabitants are determined to fight to the last man before they will give up to the savages.

“It is reported that there are at Sagana 1,000 in one body waiting for the order to strike. I have subscribed for you \$25 for the defense of the town, which I hope will meet with your approbation, as I considered it my duty so to do, as your property here was at stake in case the Indians succeeded in their attempt on this town.

“I have uniformed and enrolled myself in the infantry company in the legionary corps. We were this morning alarmed about 2 o’clock by a man from the country who reported the Indians were within half a



mile of the town. The drums beat the alarm and the whole town gathered together, amounting to about 200 men, not half of them armed and some with axes, etc., when we had the satisfaction of being told by the governor the alarm originated from a quarrel between two straggling Indians and a Frenchman and that it was a false alarm. I am just going to work with the rest."

The picket line he refers to was composed of posts set firmly in the earth and extending 12 or 15 feet above the ground and set close together. The block house was in the center of Jefferson avenue, east of and near the intersection with Randolph street. It was subsequently used as a jail.

#### BELLE ISLE IN 1810.

William Macomb died in 1796, just before England surrendered Detroit to the Americans. He and his brother Alexander had been in business in Detroit for many years, though they had ended their partnership some time before William died.

At the time of his death William was the owner of several large tracts of land in and near Detroit. He owned Hog Island—which we know as Belle Isle—our beautiful city park. He owned Grosse Isle—covering 6,040 acres of farm lands. He owned the Grand Marais farm—that is the "farm at the big marsh"—now occupied, in part, by the Waterworks and extending back from the river about three miles. This farm included nearly 500 acres. He also owned what we know as the Cass farm. This included all the lands between Cass avenue and Third street, reaching from the river

to the railroad crossing near the boulevard of the present city. This farm had formerly been owned by the family of St. Martin, and was sometimes called the St. Martin farm. It was also sometimes called the Macomb farm, and was later known and is now called the Cass farm from Gen. Lewis Cass, who bought it from the Macombs and owned it till the time of his death in 1866. The Cass farm covered about 500 acres of land.

William Macomb left a will, which was probated in the Canadian courts at Detroit, and the will and court records were carried across the river at the time of the exodus in 1796 and are now resting with the court records at Sandwich or at Windsor.

By his will Mr. Macomb devised all of his real estate to his sons, William, David and John W. Macomb. For some reason he did not permit his daughters—and he had several—to inherit any of his real property.

The writer of the first of the subjoined letters was Alexander Macomb, the father of General Alexander Macomb, and the uncle of John W. Macomb to whom he refers. The two letters were written nearly at the same time, but from the greater distance the second letter had to travel the interval between the arrival of the two letters in Detroit was more than a month.

The first letter reads as follows:

“New York, June 20, 1810.

Sir:

I enclose a mortgage from John W. Macomb to me and transfer'd to John Anthony Rucker, who is married to Sarah, John W.'s sister. He wishes you would have it recorded and return it by post. I have written to

Mr. Angus Mc Intosh to pay you the expense of recording and have taken the liberty of troubling you, being emboldened so to do from the friendly manner in which you have always acted towards the family.

I will thank you to inform me what is the value of those lands, and if a sale could be made of John's third. He has established himself in the Island of Cuba, in the town of Trinidad, where he is now cultivating a coffee plantation in company with my son William, and he is desirous of disposing of his property at Detroit. I am of opinion, however, that he would do better at Detroit than at Trinidad.

I am, respectfully, Sir, yr. ob. st.

Alex Macomb."

The second letter from John W. Macomb, the son of William Macomb, mentions his companion, William Macomb, his cousin, and another by the same name of Detroit, his brother. His letter reads as follows:

"Trinidad de Cuba, June 27, 1810.

Dear Sir:

As my business in this part of the world will not permit my attendance to my property in your territory, and as you have the agency of the estate, by power of attorney from Mr. Mackintosh, one of the executors of my late father, it is incumbent on you to account to such of the heirs as have become of age.

On the first day of May last I became twenty-one, since which I have never received any benefit from the estate, although entitled to one-third of the net income, which must be something handsome. I have therefore to request you will (as soon as possible) transmit me a statement of the receipts and expenditures of the estate during your agency, and whatever the balance may be

of my proportion (be it ever so small) to remit it to Mr. Alex. Macomb of New York in my account, his acknowledgment will be a sufficient receipt.

I will thank you likewise to inform me what is the supposed value of the property in general, as I have some idea of disposing of part of it. I presume my brother, Wm., is not with you, as my last letter from the family mentioned his intention of paying them a visit. I shall write him by way of New York. In writing you will direct your letters to the care of Mr. Alex Macomb, who will forward them to this place.

Mr. Wm. Macomb joins me in wishing you much happiness.

With respect, I remain, your most obedient  
servant,

John W. Macomb."

A reply to both letters was forwarded to Alexander Macomb in New York February 28, 1811. In that letter valuations were placed upon the Macomb properties here, as follows:

Seven sections of 640 acres each,	
on Grosse Island, \$3 per acre.....	\$13,440
Farm below Detroit (the Cass farm now so-	
called) .....	7,500
640 acres on Hog Island (now Belle Isle),	
at \$3.00 per acre . . . . .	1,920
Grand Marais farm (about 500 acres,	
including Henry Gladwin park).....	1,500
 Total . . . . .	 \$24,360

Try to imagine buying all the land between Cass avenue and Third street, extending from the river to the railroad, at the boulevard, for \$7,500!

While you are drawing on your imagination for the prices of land in 1810, remember that the population of the city in that year was 1,650, and that it now reaches 700,000 or 800,000.

Imagine buying all of Belle Isle for \$1,920!

#### BRITISH TAKE DETROIT

The real war came in 1812 and the place fell into British control in August, 1812, and so remained until September, 1813.

No business of any account was done during the years 1812 and 1813, while the British soldiers were in the city. People were exiled from the post by the British general, Henry Procter, and driven from their farms by the Indians. Fields were overrun and left uncultivated, cattle were driven off and killed and houses and fences were burned.

When the American again took possession the country was like a place visited by a tornado. Nothing useful remained save the bare earth. It meant commencing over again from the very start and building anew a devastated country. In the village the deserted houses bore the marks of Indian intruders and reckless foreign soldiers.

## TELLS OF CONDITIONS

As an illustration of the state of affairs at this time we will copy a letter from Col. John Anderson, who lived at the River Raisin, but who spent the year 1813 in Detroit:

“Amherstburgh, 6th Decb. 1813.

Sol. Sibly, Esq.:

Dear Sir—I received your letter of the 20th Nov. and paid due attention to the contents. I am sorey to find that the prospects is so gloomey for your progressing in your journey home, I was in grate hopes that you would have arrived to take possession of your house and property before we left it, & on that account we waited as long as possible, to move from it, as soon as I understood by Col. Brush & Mr. Abbott, that you would be on, I made my arrangements to deliver it up, and would have left it seven weeks before I did, which was on the 27th Nov., but seeing the grate destruction which was made by the soldiers whareever thay was quartered, houses, piquets, stables, palisading, &c., all destroyed. Col Brush, McCombes, Bobeans, &c., farms all striped of fences & piquets, also the two grave yards, and all the guardings in town, with a few exceptions, and when I left yours not a thing was touched, and as the most of the troops are in their new houses, I hope nothing will be hurt. I would have stayed longer, but wood, hay and all other artickles was so hard to come at, that it was empossable, as wood small lodes 10s., bread 2s., pork 2s., beef 1s., pots, 12s., butter 4s., hay 2s. pr. bundle, oats 8s., wheat 12s., flour 48s., and none of them lade in as I was expecting you

every day. I think the reason how I saved your property, was we had two goods cows, which gave a good dale of milk to the seek, & I took two officers to live with us, and every night I went out and cautioned them about the property; but all that the Indians had left in the gardens they took; Mrs. Anderson had it in contemplation two or three times last summer to leave the house on account of the Indeans, who lived in the Council House and round the governors, which was occupied by Capt. McKee and him and the Indeans yoused to get drunk, and you may think how it was for a woman alone, but when she thought of the house and property, how it would be destroyed, she was determined to hold out. A number of nights she never went to bed. I delivered the kees to Col. Brush, I left in the house all your salt, two barks of suger, three loves of suger, one of the barrels of Cherey bounce is lost, the hoops on one end give way and it all run out, which was the first knowledge Mrs. A. had that their was any liquers in that place, it run out to the other apartment, and also by the smell, the ballence is all to the good except two gall. of whiskey which I took on my arrivel, and will replace it to you when we meet. Mrs. Anderson used the remains of two barks of suger twenty-nine pounds which I will also replace, I delivered the salt to Mr. Jas. Abbott yesterday—the house and all the property safe, I should be happy to see you at home, but it is so seekly that I was pleased to leave the town as the hospital is kapt in the governor's house and from two to three every day died. Yeasterd evening Col. Brush's life was despaired of. Doct. Brown told me he was doubtful as to his fate, John Whistler died since I left town—and a number of other citizens the one-third of the people from River Raisin is dead, so I

think if you remain until the seeson is good it will be for the beast, as the frost will kill the priveland disese.

I think provisions at the before mentioned prises could be procured but not for less.

I did not see Mr. Guane, but Mrs. Abbott, who will write you, promised me to see him.

General Cass has given me the office of sheriff over the western destrict of Upper Canada, and auctioneer. We have no news worth your attention in this place. Mrs. Anderson joins me in our kind love and best respects to Mrs. Sibley and all the family and all friends.

I have the honour to be your most obd't & Hum. Svt.,

John Anderson.

P. S. The Indeans brok one part of the porch as you go up the stapes, took one ax, 2 howes & their horses eat some of the bark of the treas.

J. A.

Sol. Sibley, Esq., Cleveland, Ohio."

The house of Judge Sibley, referred to in the above letter, was located on the northeast corner of the present Randolph street and Jefferson avenue. It fronted on Randolph street, with a fine dooryard. In later years there was a large brick kitchen on the easterly end of the house, with the entrance from Jefferson avenue. This kitchen was a favorite resort for many of the political friends of the judge—for he was somewhat of a politician withal. In this kitchen many of the schemes for the political government of the city and the territory were hatched and brooded.

Across the street from the kitchen was the governor's mansion erected in 1806 by Gov. William Hull, and later converted into a hotel, called the American house. It was destroyed in the great fire of 1848. At the time Col. Anderson's letter was written he says



the house was occupied by Capt. Mc Kee. It is probable that he refers to the time when the British were in control of the city, before Sept. 28, 1812, and that the occupant was Capt. Thomas Mc Kee, a British officer, whose home was in Sandwich.

He also refers to the Indians in the council house. The council house was where the office of the water board is located, on the southwest corner of Jefferson avenue and Randolph street. No Indians were housed there after Proctor left the city in September, 1813.

The Governor's house was used as a hospital by the Americans in 1813.

Col. Elijah Brush, referred to in the letter, was the father of the late Edmund A. Brush, and died Dec. 14, 1813. His physician, Dr. William Brown, lived in Detroit for many years after this date. His home was on the north side of Jefferson avenue, between Bates and Randolph streets. He died in July, 1838.

John Whistler was the brother of Sarah Abbott (Mrs. James Abbott), and the uncle of James Abbott Mc Neill Whistler, the famous artist, lately deceased.

Major John Whistler died at St. Louis, Mo., Sept. 3, 1829. The person here referred to was his son.

After the Americans came in and peace was declared, the people began to return to their old homes and gather the remnants of their property to begin life anew. It was a slow process. Courts were re-established, a new governor and secretary were appointed. The old judges returned and the courts were opened. A session of the Supreme Court was held May 18th, 1812, and no subsequent session was held until September 19, 1814, when the Marshal called the Court in

session at the house of John Kinzie. James Witherell was the only judge present. A grand jury was called composed of the following persons:

Robert Abbott,  
Gabriel Godfroy, Jr.,  
Jacob Visger,  
Henry J. Hunt,  
Joseph Campeau,  
John W. Macomb,  
Samuel Abbott,  
Richard Smyth,  
John Palmer,  
George Mc Dougall,  
Denis Campau,  
De Garino Jones,  
Conrad Ten Eyck,  
William Russell,  
Abraham Cook,  
Robert Smart,  
Oliver Miller.

Several members of the Grand Jury were not present. They were:

Gabriel Godfroy, Sr.,  
Christian Clemens,  
Jean Marie Beaubien,  
John Whipple,  
Shubael Conant.

The only business transacted was the admission of Charles Larned as a member of the Bar.

## A NEW CHARTER FOR DETROIT

A new charter was granted to the city of Detroit in 1815. New people began coming in and local and national improvements assisted the place to grow.

Reference has already been made to the charter of Detroit passed by the Assembly of the North West Territory at Chillicothe in January, 1802. That was "An Act to incorporate the Town of Detroit." The principal provisions of the act were that the town should be governed by five trustees, who were to be elected annually; the other town officers were a secretary, assessor, collector and marshal. Electors must be free holders or house holders paying a rent of forty dollars per year.

All officers were to be elected by popular vote excepting the treasurer and he was to be appointed by the village trustees. The trustees could enact all laws and ordinances necessary for the convenience and good government of the place.

At the annual election all of the electors were called together and the acts passed by the trustees during the previous year were submitted to them for their approval. If any law or ordinance was disapproved by a majority of those present and voting, it thereby became void.

The free holders, at this annual meeting, had the power to vote such sums of money as the majority thought proper, for the use of the town for the ensuing year. The assessor was to assess the amount in such manner and upon such objects as the meeting might direct.

The little money that was necessary for the proper conduct of the place was derived from licenses, fines and levies upon personal property, such as house hold goods, stocks in trade, etc. No taxes were levied on real estate for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the village government. Real estate was not exempt from taxation, but the tax was levied against the individual owner and not against the land as it is now assessed.

Within a very short time after the passage of the Chillicothe charter, Detroit, in consequence of the admission of the State of Ohio, became a part of the territory of Indiana. In 1805 on the formation of Michigan Territory, Detroit was selected as the capital.

The charter of Detroit was not changed by these changes of territorial government, but in 1806, September 13th, "An Act concerning the City of Detroit" was passed. This provided that what had heretofore been the "town of Detroit" should thenceforth be a city, the government thereof to be vested in a Mayor to be appointed by the governor of the territory, and to hold office for one year. There should be a City Council of two chambers. One chamber to be composed of three members to be elected annually by ballot in the month of September. Electors were to be inhabitants of the city above the age of twenty-one years, who have paid their public taxes.

The second chamber, also of three members, was to be elected by similarly qualified inhabitants in the month of March each year. The chambers were not to be united in their work. Laws could be enacted by a majority vote of each chamber.

The mayor could veto the action of the two houses and there was no provision for over riding the veto.

The Council could regulate the City affairs in general and in particular, "provide for the education of youths; lay and collect taxes and pass all necessary laws to give effect and operation to their powers."

Nothing is said about the manner in which the tax budget was to be made up and one can infer that this entire matter was left to the Council.

The Charter contained no provision for the levy of taxes on real estate and it is probable that the authorities did not then understand the process that is in vogue at the present time. There was no provision that the laws enacted by the Council should be submitted to the people or to any other authority for approval. If the laws were satisfactory to the Council and were not vetoed by the Mayor, they remained in force until repealed by some subsequent Council.

Solomon Sibley was the first Mayor appointed under the provisions of this charter and the second and last appointment was Elijah Brush.

#### ELECTION OF 1806

Under the Charter of 1806 the first election for the first chamber was held at the house of Richard Smyth on the last Monday of September, 1806, under the direction of Solomon Sibley, Mayor of the City. The Mayor opened and counted the votes on September 30th.

The ticket voted was a joint ticket for three candidates.

There were 61 ballots cast divided as follows:

Stanley Griswold .....	61 votes.
John Harvey .....	55 votes.
Peter Desnoyers .....	49 votes.
James Abbott .....	10 votes.
William Brown .....	6 votes.

Whereupon Stanley Griswold, John Harvey and Peter Desnoyers were declared elected members of the first chamber of the City Council.

On the first Monday in October, 1806, an election was held in similar manner for members of the second chamber. The polls were opened at 4 o'clock and closed at sunset. The ballots were counted October 7th, by the Mayor, aided by the members of the First Chamber of the City Council. There was a joint ballot cast for three members, with the following result:

James Dodemead .....	34 votes.
Isaac Jones .....	35 votes.
John Gentle .....	20 votes.
James Andrews .....	14 votes.
John Conner .....	1 vote.
James Abbott .....	2 votes.
George Mc Dougall .....	1 vote.
John Watson .....	1 vote.

Whereupon James Dodemead, Isaac Jones and John Gentle were declared elected members of the Second Chamber of the City Council.

The law did not work satisfactorily and on February 24, 1809, the Governor and Judges repealed it.

It is unfortunate that there were no newspapers printed in Detroit at that time that would give us some information as to the reasons for repealing this act.

The repeal provision covers two lines in the printed act of the last mentioned date and no reasons whatever are given.

The government of the City now fell under the direct control of the Governor and Judges and so remained until October 24, 1815, when the Act of 1802, passed at Chillicothe, was revised and re-enacted, changed only slightly and providing that what, in the original act was called the "Town of Detroit" should be the "City of Detroit." It is a remarkable evidence of the wisdom of the Assembly of the Northwest territory that although the territory had increased in population and perhaps in wisdom and experience, the old act of 1802 was re-enacted in 1815. The people again had the right to fix the budget and to pass upon the laws enacted by representatives elected by themselves. There was no mayor or officer higher than the members of the board of trustees. No person appointed by the Governor could longer control their action. No veto could prevent them from carrying out their wishes and the wishes of the people they represented. The act was a re-investment of the powers of government in the people who were governed, and it was a signal victory for home rule.

The Council House was appointed for holding the first election and here on October 30, 1815, the first five trustees were elected. Solomon Sibley was chosen Chairman, and James Abbott presided whenever Sibley was absent.

It was under this form of City Government that Detroit existed until, in 1824, in the general upheaval of the time, a new form was adopted, and a mayor and

council, elected by the people, came into vogue. Then began the form of municipal government that has subsisted, without material change, until very recently.

#### STATUTES OF MICHIGAN TERRITORY

Within a short time after the passage of the act for the organization of Michigan Territory, the Governor and three judges were appointed and assembled in Detroit in June, 1805.

The necessity for proper laws to govern the territory was satisfied by a compilation made between that date and the eighth day of the following October.

This compilation is generally referred to as the Woodward Code, taking its name from Judge Woodward who had a great deal to do in its formation.

The law of Congress provided that the Governor and Judges might adopt laws from the States, and in this compilation the Congressional act was quite closely followed.

After this compilation was completed the legislative body proceeded, from time to time, to adopt other laws and they were not very scrupulous to copy the laws of the states, but would take a word or phrase from the laws of one state and a portion of an act from another State, and thus evaded the provisions laid down by Congress. In 1816 these laws were collected and published. This compilation is called the Cass Code.

The third code or compilation was published in 1821, and in 1824 the laws of the territory were compiled by



the Legislative Board. In the following year there was a complete compilation of all laws of the Governor and Judges, of Congress, and of the Legislative Council, made by direction of the Legislative Council.

We soon had a newspaper—the Gazette. The first number was issued July 25, 1817. It had a circulation of 120 copies. The first steamboat to plow the waters of the western lakes came the same year. The University of Michigan was established and the corner stone of the first university building was laid Sept. 21, 1817, by the Hon. Augustus B. Woodward. A long-needed institution—a bank—was organized June 2, 1818, but did not issue bills until January 1, 1819. This was the Bank of Michigan; John R. Williams was president and the other directors were Solomon Sibley, Stephen Mack, Henry J. Hunt, Philip Lecuyer, Abraham Edwards and William Brown.

The Erie canal, although a New York enterprise, was believed to be of untold value to our territory.

The general government had been engaged for some years in settling the titles to the old French farms along the river and now (in 1818) it opened the farm lands in the rear for sale to the general public. The lands were sold on favorable terms and at moderate prices. Roads were projected from Detroit in various directions. As an illustration of the values of lands at this time a correspondent of the Gazette compared lands with farm produce. A turkey was worth one acre of land; two pigs equaled one acre; two geese equaled one acre, two bushels of potatoes equaled one acre; four bushels of turnips or two bushels of beets equaled one acre.

## PONTIAC IS FOUNDED

One of the most important of the roads leading from Detroit, was the Saginaw road, now known as Woodward avenue. Some of the Detroit citizens had purchased the lands now occupied by the City of Pontiac, and laid out a town site.

The men who composed the Pontiac company were largely instrumental in laying out the Saginaw road. They were William Woodbridge, Stephen Mack, Solomon Sibley, John L. Whiting, Austin E. Wing, David C. Mc Kinstry, Benjamin Stead, Henry Jackson Hunt, Abraham Edwards, Archibald Darragh, Alexander Macomb and Andrew G. Whitney, of Detroit, and a few other gentlemen from Macomb County. The organization of the Company is dated Nov. 5, 1818.

It took but a short time to set affairs moving in the right direction—for business was “picking up” rapidly and the men who were interested were good business men and very energetic.

Andrew G. Whitney shortly afterwards became the brother-in-law of Dr. John L. Whiting. Their wives were sisters, the two daughters of Mr. John Tallman, of Hudson, N. Y. (Andrew G. Whitney married Eliza Tallman April 3, 1820). Mr. Whitney was at this time a partner of Solomon Sibley, in the practice of law in Detroit. It is to him we now resort for a description of Pontiac in 1819, contained in a letter written to William Woodbridge, who was then in Washington, the first delegate from Michigan to Congress.

The following is a copy of the letter:

“Detroit, Jan’y 10th, 1819.  
Saturday Evening.

My Dear Sir:

I have just now called on Mrs. Woodbridge. She and Julianne and little Leverett are all in perfect health. Mrs. Woodbridge says she intended to have written today, but the children have occupied her attention too much to allow time. Mr. Deming was going to write till Mrs. Woodbridge mentioned she should. Mr. Lanman, who has been with us during the setting of the court, was going to write also, but he has taken it into his head to start for the Raisin this afternoon and can’t write. Mr. Sibley intended to write, but is too unwell and has been for some days and wished me to make his excuse and present his compliments. In consequence of which promises you will get no letter from Detroit this mail unless I write myself. In consequence of which I hope this letter will be so acceptable that you will pardon my neglect to write sooner. On the last mail day and when the Detroit party started for Washington, I was too much absorbed and harassed with our county court business to write—and in fact my brain is not entirely disentangled yet from the quips and quiddities, cramps and knots with which it was snarled during court week. . . . The business of this court was hurried through in a manner unknown in this county. His honor the cheif was determined to outdo the supreme court in relieving the burdens of jurymen and witnesses and the public.

Mr. Sibley mentions to me that the president and directors of our bank have made proposals to the government to negotiate their money concerns in this ter-

ritory, and to have their notes taken at the land offices, and wishes me to mention this to you and request you to give any assistance in your power in this behalf. The bank began to issue bills the 2nd of Jan'y. But, as yet have been very spairing in discounts. Your humble servant has had the honor of being appointed attorney to the bank. Commissioners have been appointed to run the road to Pontiac—made their report. But the settlers have not accepted it, but have actually laid out a road beginning about nine miles from Detroit through to Pontiac on the Saginaw trail. The commissioners had run a road about 14 miles on a straight line. Several log houses are now building between here and Pontiac, and between 30 and 40 quarter sections taken up on the road.

Maj. Mack has contracted with the land board to turnpike the road through the 10,000 acres, and Col. Leavenworth, I understand, will set out tomorrow with a large detachment of troops to cut a causeway the remainder of the road, from Mack's contract to Oak Upland, where the actual settlers have commenced theirs.

We have finished a good log house 20 feet square at Pontiac, and have a family settled in it. Of the six donation lots we offered to the six first settlers being mechanics, who would build on their lots within six months, four are already applied for by a tanner and currier, a blacksmith, a millwright and shoemaker. Two farmers from New York also have applied for farms to rent on our purchase, and go immediately to work. We have sold one-fourth of the millseat for \$250 and the purchaser is to superintend the erection of a sawmill immediately. We have advertised our lots in Pontiac for sale on next Thursday. We shall, how-

ever, sell but few at auction. Some will go as high as \$100, we think.

The governor has set off the new county by proclamation and called it very appropriately the "County of Oakland." Commissioners are appointed to fix the county seat—we think it must be at Pontiac.

I received \$115 from Mr. Deming and paid it to the land office for our fraction on the Huron and have taken the certificate. Many entries of land have been made by actual settlers since your departure.

I shall endeavour to procure a good tenant from New York to go on our fraction next spring, but lest I should fail, had you not better get one, if you can, from Ohio, as you come home, and if we get two I have another quarter section near Le Roy's that one of them may have.

My hopes of the prospects of this county, sir, rise every day. I shall not be idle while in New York, for the public good of Michigan.

Before this reaches you, you will probably see Mr. Wing, who started away suddenly and unexpectedly for Washington four days ago. From him and the gentleman who is also on the way to W., you will learn the little incidents of each day here before you would receive them from me.

I shall accompany Mrs. Wing by Mr. W. Request to Massachusetts. We shall set out as soon as there shall be good sleighing through to Albany, probably about the middle of February. I should be very happy if you will write to me before you leave Washington and also on your arrival in Ohio or at Detroit. If you should arrive here early please direct your letters to me at "Hudson, Columbia county," New York, and I

shall receive them immediately wherever I may be—but I shall most probably be there.

I think it is very doubtful whether I shall return to Detroit before the lake opens.

Should you please to write me immediately on the receipt of this I shall probably receive it before my departure, and if not it would follow me to Hudson.

The slovenliness of this scrawl must be placed to the credit of procrastination.

I forgot to mention it in proper place that when I left your house just now Julianne gave me a kiss for papa.

With most sincere respect & esteem, I am, your most obedient servant,

A. G. WHITNEY.

To the Hon. Wm. Woodbridge, Esq."

(The river Huron, mentioned in the above letter, is now called the Clinton River).

#### CENSUS OF 1819

A census of Detroit was taken in January, 1819, which made the following fair showing of the place at that time:

Population of Detroit exclusive of the garrison:  
Heads of families 142 males, and 139 females:

	Males.	Females.
Under 10 years of age .....	139	156
Of 10 and under 16 .....	86	68
Of 16 and under 26 .....	177	119
Of 26 and under 45 .....	152	70
Of 45 and upwards .....	42	31
	<hr/> 596	<hr/> 444

Total white population .....	1,040
Total colored population .....	70

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Grand total .....1,110

There were 142 dwellings and 131 shops and public buildings.

Catholic clergymen, 2 (Gabriel Richard and Joseph Janvier); Protestant clergyman, 1 (John Monteith); attorneys-at-law, 12; physicians and surgeons, 3; teachers and instructors, 6; scholars, 170; blacksmiths, 13; watchmakers and jewelers, 7; gunsmith, 1; carpenters, 60; coopers, 6; cabinet makers, 3; coach maker, 1; wheelwrights, 5; tanners, 3; saddlers, 5; shoemakers, 12; masons, 23; tailors, 13; hatters, 6; tinnerns, 3; printers, 3; innkeepers, 3; dry goods merchants, 24; wholesale grocer, 1; groceries and ale houses, 16; bake houses, 5.

The exports from Detroit in 1818 were \$69,330.82 and the imports were \$15,611.86. Money was scarce and the merchants issued "accommodation tickets" that passed for currency.

#### BUSINESS AFFECTED

But already the coming depression had set its mark on the city and territory. As early as the preceding March the change in affairs had affected some people and some kinds of business.

Abraham Edwards, who had always been prominent in business and politics, concluded either to leave Detroit or find a situation in the government employment.

His letter indicates his situation, and serves also to denote the general trend of business affairs. In this letter, which is dated at Detroit, March 22, 1818, and is directed to William Woodbridge, Mr. Edwards says:

“As mercantile business is exceedingly dull and the prospects of its continuing so in this place, I have made up my mind to apply for the appointment of a Dept. Qr. Master Gen. for this deptm't, and therefore take the liberty to request from you on my behalf, letters to Mr. Barber or any other member or members of congress you may deem proper to address on this subject.”

Mr. James Barbour, to whom he refers, was Secretary of War under President John Quincy Adams.

The Detroit Gazette in its issue of Sept. 24, 1819, says:

“The distress which pervades every portion of our country is variously accounted for.

“When you deal in generals, indeed when you declaim against overtrading, luxury and extravagance, and recommend reform, assent is yielded with willingness.

“There is one cause in the western country which has operated very powerfully in producing the present state of things and which must continue to operate in the same way, I mean speculation in the public lands.”

And the same paper in an article published Nov. 5, 1819, says:

“Notwithstanding the extreme pressure of the times in every portion of the Union, several families have found means to emigrate to this territory since the first of September.”



And on Dec. 10, 1819, it said:

“The embarrassments and losses which are daily experienced by many of our fellow citizens in consequence of the great quantity of depreciated Ohio bank notes which are now circulating among them, will, it is to be hoped, cause a general attendance at the council house this evening, when some measures will probably be entered into that will in a great degree prevent the impositions to which a large proportion of this community are subjected, by the speculation of Ohio bankers and bank agents.”

#### CITY DEBT IN 1819

The City Treasurer made a report May 10th, 1819, showing the state of the City's finances at that date.

The amount received from Market	
Stalls, fines and tavern licenses	
was .....	\$254.24
Expended for the market .....	\$ 13.19
Fire hooks .....	64.13
Services of the Treasurer and Marshal and percentage for collections .....	176.17
Sheet iron for Council House.....	.75
	<hr/>
	254.24
	<hr/>
Balance on hand .....	000.00

The politicians, as usual, cleaned the larder. Nor was this the worst part of the report. The Board of Trustees had incurred debts that left the city in a financial “hole.”

There was due Isaac W. Day for services as

Marshal .....	\$ 65.57
Due George Mc Dougall as Secretary .....	3.00
Due Thomas Rowland as Secretary .....	15.00
Due Sheldon & Reed for printing .....	20.87
Due J. W. Tompkins building engine house....	130.00
Due Henry Sanderson for repairing engine.....	87.10
Due Henry J. Hunt for rope for hay scales...	4.84
Due Melvin Dorr on settlement.....	27.05

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\$353.93

Old City orders of 1817 still unpaid ..... 230.00

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\$583.93

The only offset to this indebtedness was two items of notes due from individuals and the Board of Trustees aggregating \$180.77.

It was also stated that the accounts of Asa Partridge, a former Clerk of the Market, were still unpaid.

As an illustration of the times in Detroit as compared with other cities, the Gazette of September 17th, 1819, stated that great destitution existed in other places. In Philadelphia people were working on the turnpike roads at one shilling per day and fifty persons had been discharged from a single factory because there was no work to be had. In Detroit affairs were much better. "We all complain, to be sure, and assert that the times are terrible—but what are the facts? We pay a common laborer *one dollar* a day—A mason or a carpenter gets from *twelve shillings* to *two dollars twenty-five cents* a day, and some get \$2.50. We pay the women who do housework from *six* to *eight* dollars per month."

"We also pay *a shilling a pound* for *poor* mutton; eight and ten cents a pound for *poor* beef; \$20 to \$25 per bbl for ordinary pork."

"Nothing can be purchased for less than *sixpence*, and it is believed that on an average there is not a copper coin in the possession of more than one individual out of three hundred in this territory."

"Two years ago we saw five dollars put into our pocket book oftener than we see one dollar placed there now."

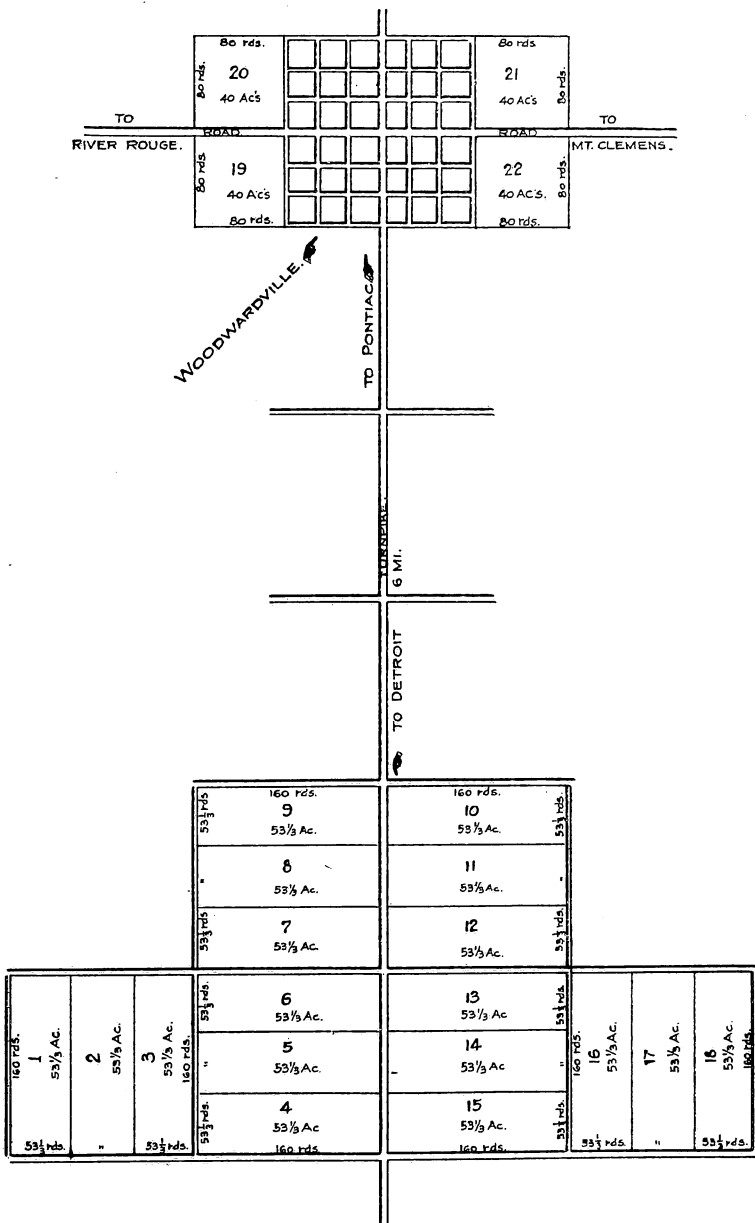
From this time on for several years the times continued to grow worse. Every effort was made to revive business. Many changes and improvements in the city and in its laws were made to that end. The second form of government for the territory was obtained. This provided that the legislative powers of the governor and judges should be transferred to a body of men elected in the territory, called the legislative council. The first legislative council, elected in 1823, was composed of nine members, but two years later the number was increased to 13 members. Michigan was granted the right of representation in congress and William Woodbridge was elected the first delegate in 1819.

The finances of the country had fallen into such a shape that, in 1821, the prisoners in the County Jail were threatened with death from freezing. The orders of the County Commissioners were twenty-five per cent below par. The jailor was furnished with these orders to obtain fuel. The Commissioners were unwilling to allow the jailor a credit for the discount of twenty-five per cent and as he was unwilling to suffer the loss, no wood was obtained and the prisoners suffered the con-

sequences. The County Commissioners were Abraham Edwards, Peter J. Desnoyers and John P. Sheldon. In 1822 they reported that the indebtedness of the County in 1820 was \$1303.82. They had uncollected some \$1157.41, but a good portion of this was worthless. In 1821 they expended \$1565.93 and had collected only \$992.69. A portion of the remaining unpaid taxes for that year could not be collected. In consequence of this unfortunate state of affairs it would be necessary to levy a tax of \$3000 for the next year. This was an unheard of amount and its levy would be resisted by the taxpayers.

The following year (1823) the receipts were \$2223.30 and the expenses \$3795.03, showing a rapid accumulation of County debt and no funds in sight to pay it.

SCALE -- 1 INCH = 1500 FEET.





Few persons of the present generation ever heard of the village of Woodwardville—a paper city projected on land on Woodward avenue six miles distant from the river. Such a city was projected and platted in the year 1825. It was the first effort in Michigan to boom the lands adjacent to the cities and large places. That the effort was a failure and reached only the “platting” stage may be accepted as an evidence of the wisdom of the early citizen, but as it was followed, a few years later, by many such paper cities, where swindles were consummated in great numbers, it may be inferred that the failure of the first attempt was due, either to apathy or to poverty.

Judge Woodward was an energetic, capable and eccentric man and judge. A sketch of his life with some allusions to the Bank of Detroit, Slavery in Detroit, the University of Michigan and to other matters connected with his life, can be found in the publications of the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society in volumes 29, 37 and 38. His eccentricities led him into continual quarrels with his associates, Hull, Witherell and Griffin. He would not agree with them on the passage of laws, and sometimes he refused to associate with them. He absented himself from his duties many times and not infrequently refused to hold Court for months at a time. He was chief justice from 1805 to 1823 and at the latter date was superseded upon a re-organization of the judicial system of the territory. The territorial judges in 1823 were Woodward, Griffin and Witherell and upon the re-organization Witherell only was re-appointed. The two new judges were Solomon Sibley and John Hunt. The Governor and Judges, in addition to their legislative and judicial powers un-

der the Act of Congress of 1805, were also the Land Board under the Act of 1806.

It was one of their duties to sell the Ten Thousand Acre Tract which Congress had donated for the purpose of building a Court House and Jail. After the jail was built it was some years before any effort was made to build the Court House. In 1818 a start was made towards selling the lands in the Ten Thousand Acre Tract and they were put up at auction. About the only purchaser at this Auction sale was Judge Woodward. Anticipating that in a few years the land would be very valuable and that the increase in price would be very great, he bought twelve hundred and eighty acres. The deeds were not made to carry out these sales until four years later. The lots purchased at this sale, the quantity of land in each lot or section and the price paid by him were as follows:

Section 4, containing 160 acres sold for	\$100
Section 5, containing 160 acres sold for	100
Section 44, containing 160 acres sold for	100
Section 45, containing 160 acres sold for	100
Section 55, containing 160 acres sold for	100
Section 56, containing 160 acres sold for	644
Section 57, containing 160 acres sold for	536
Section 58, containing 160 acres sold for	100

Making a total of 1280 acres for \$1780.

Sections 4 and 5 of this tract, containing 160 acres each, are located on either side of Woodward avenue. Lot 4 extends from Woodward avenue to Oakland avenue and the northerly part of it is now occupied by the Ford Motor Company.

Lot 5 on the westerly side of Woodward avenue, extends to Hamilton boulevard and the upper portion



is now occupied by the D. U. R. for car barns and yards. These two sections (4 and 5) constituted Woodwardville.

Sections 55, 56, 57 and 58, containing 640 acres, extend a distance of two miles along the northerly side of the Grand Boulevard, from Linwood avenue to Dequindre street. They extend northerly one-half mile from the boulevard.

Sections 44 and 45 front on Woodward Avenue at about the location of Virginia avenue. Each section has a half mile frontage on Woodward Avenue.

Judge Woodward held this land in an uncultivated condition, save only for the cutting of fire wood, from 1818 until his death in 1827. The Saginaw turnpike, now called Woodward avenue, was opened through the entire length and was graded and used as a road, before 1825.

In 1823 Woodward ceased to be judge of Michigan Territory and was appointed judge of the United States Court in the territory of Florida.

Upon leaving Detroit he undertook to dispose of his real estate but was not successful.

Believing that the part of his land lying the farthest from the city could be sold if laid out into a village, he had a portion of sections 4 and 5, containing 320 acres, platted into small lots.

This plat and the plat of Ypsilanti, which the judge also owned and named, are the first attempts in Michigan of the wild sub-division of outside lands made for the purpose of sale to speculators.

The Woodward avenue land, called Woodwardville,

was advertised for sale in the Michigan Herald, July 14, 1825. In the advertisement the judge says: "On this land I projected a village under the name of *Woodwardville*. It lies about six miles northwest from the City of Detroit and is thought a good stand for a variety of establishments calculated to contribute to the accommodation of that splendid and rising metropolis."

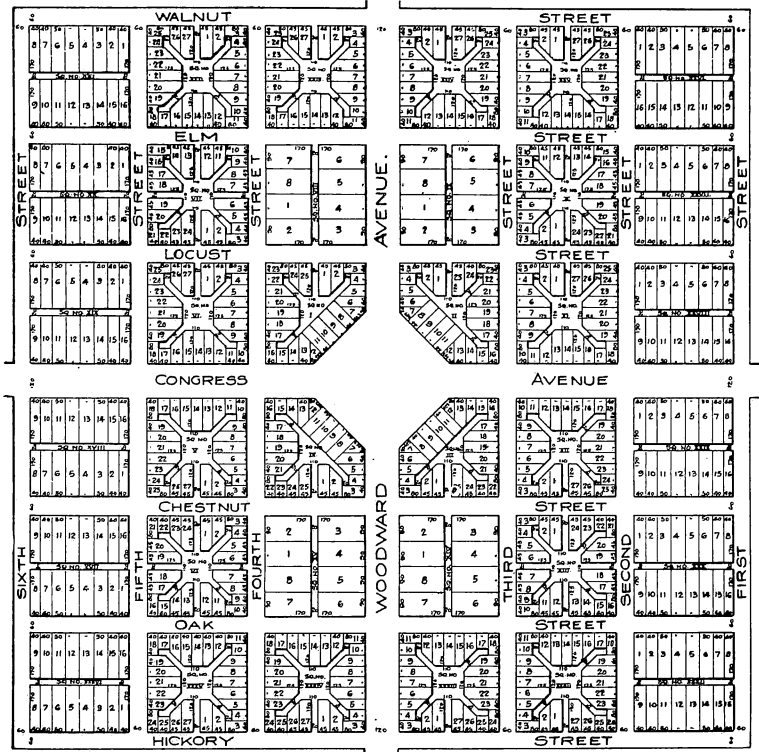
The lots were offered at from \$10 to \$50 each, according to location.

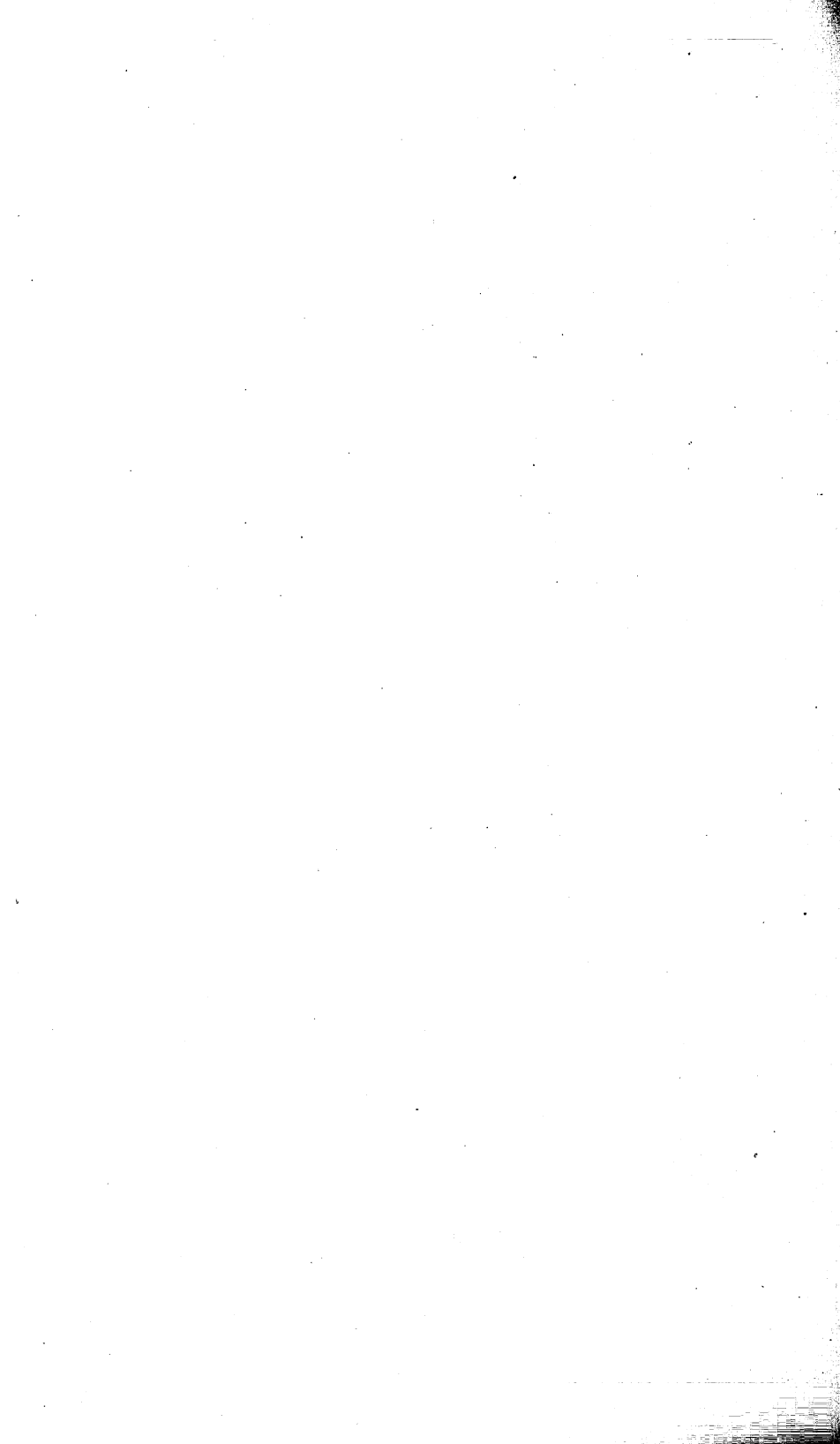
In the plat of this village again appears the idea that Judge Woodward had attempted to carry out in his plan of Detroit, of having numerous small interior parks—a breathing place in each block. The plan, a copy of which is here shown, was drawn by John Farmer and the original is in the manuscripts of the public library. The plat was not recorded and no sales were ever made of its lots.

Judge Woodward died in 1827. He was never married. His heirs were his brother, John Woodward and sister, Maria Pease. In 1833 the heirs sold the entire lands owned by Judge Woodward in the Ten Thousand Acre Tract, to Thomas E. Davis for \$7455.

This tract of land originally cost Judge Woodward \$1780, or less than one dollar and fifty cents per acre. If he had placed that amount of money out at compound interest in 1818 and it had continually drawn six per cent and there had been no expense of caring for it, nor losses from bad investments, it would, in 1918, have accumulated to \$402,702. It would not be unfair to suppose that this land would have, in part, taken care of itself during this time by the sale of its timber and by its rentals for farming purposes. There were 1280

.....SCALE.....1 INCH = 250 FEET.....





acres of it. Some of this today is worth \$800 to \$1000 per foot front and much of it is worth from \$5000 to \$10,000 per acre. In 1914 I submitted the valuation of this land to two of our leading real estate dealers, Mr. W. W. Hannan and Mr. Homer Warren. Mr. Hannan placed a value of \$6000 per acre on the entire tract. That would amount to \$7,680,000.

Mr. Warren made quite an extensive computation of all of the parcels and arrived at a somewhat different conclusion. He thinks it worth at least \$10,080,000. It is probably now (1917) worth double the latter sum. Section 56 alone is valued, on the assessment rolls, at more than \$2,000,000, exclusive of improvements.

The difference between the increase in value of the land and its value in money compounded over a long term of years is a striking example of the proper investment of money in Detroit. It is not alone this parcel of land, but almost all other lands in the city. Take as an illustration, the school sites and public grounds. As an investment the City has made millions of dollars in the increase in value of lands purchased and held and for use.

The plant of the Ford Company and the Car Yards of the D. U. R. are occupying the Woodwardville of 1825.

## NEW CITY CHARTER

In 1824 a new city charter was granted and John R. Williams, the first mayor, elected in the spring of that year.

In 1825 a second newspaper—the Michigan Herald, was established in the city. It lasted about four years. It was owned and published by Henry Chipman and Joseph Seymour.

## CITY GETS NEW LANDS

In 1826 congress was persuaded to give to the city the lands that had, until that time, been occupied by the military department, consisting of all the lands lying west of Griswold street, north of Larned street, and south of Michigan avenue, extending westerly to the Cass farm, on Cass avenue. This was a very valuable tract of land and had on it a good many dwelling houses formerly used by the officers and soldiers in the garrison. The land was platted into dwelling lots, but was not put upon the market for sale until about 1830.

The fort was demolished and the land graded down and streets opened. The surplus earth was used to fill in the river front. The land was described in the Herald as follows:

“This cession contains 30 or 40 acres upon a handsome elevation in the heart of the city and includes the fort and cantonment and all the military buildings, with the exception of the arsenal, public store and house occupied by the public storekeeper. This is a most valuable acquisition to the city. The military

buildings will be put up for rent at public auction on next Saturday."

The terms upon which lots in the Military Reserve were offered for sale on May 14, 1827, were thus set forth in the Herald: "Those desirous of purchasing will deposit with the clerk of the City a description in writing of the lot or lots, upon which they are disposed to bid; to which due attention will be given, in selecting the lots to be offered, to the extent which it may be thought expedient to sell.

The terms of the sale are one-fourth to be paid in ninety days; one-fourth in one year; one-fourth in two years and one-fourth in three years, with interest. No title shall vest until the land is fully paid for, and unless a store, brick or frame house, two stories in height, shall be erected upon each lot before the expiration of the time of the last payment the previous payments and the right to the lot shall be forfeited."

The court house and capitol, located on what is now called Capitol square, has been in process of erection for several years. It was completed and occupied in 1828.

The stone church of St. Anne, located on the north-erly side of Larned street, between Bates and Randolph streets, was in process of erection for many years. It was occupied for religious services in 1828.

The Presbyterian church on the corner of Larned street and Woodward avenue and the Episcopal church in the same block on Woodward avenue, were opened in 1820 and 1824, respectively. There was a Presbyterian church on the same site in 1818, but it was moved as mentioned later on.

## BURIAL GROUNDS MOVED

The erection of these buildings and the opening of Congress street necessitated the removal of the old burying grounds that occupied the lands on Woodward avenue and Congress street in this neighborhood. These improvements were indications of the revival of business and the increase in population of the city. In 1830 a census was taken which showed the population to be 2,222—quite an increase over the census of 1819. Business was now in a prosperous condition and everything was advancing.

At a meeting of the Freeman held in Military Hall December 16, 1826, a committee of three was appointed to select a suitable site for a burial ground and report at the next meeting of the Freeman.

The committee consisted of Eurotas P. Hastings, De Garmo Jones and Shubael Conant.

They made their report at the adjourned meeting of the Freeman held at Woodworth's Hotel December 30, 1826. They reported "in favor of purchasing a certain lot of five acres belonging to Dr. William Brown, lying upon Adams avenue, and adjoining the farm of Gov. Cass, the same being offered to the city for the sum of eight hundred dollars."

This land extends along the northerly line of Adams avenue north of the Grand Circus from Woodward avenue to Cass avenue, and reached in width to Elizabeth street. It was acceptable to the citizens and the price as we now see it, was exceedingly moderate.

Something, unknown at the present time, and quite as



mysterious as the inducement that led the officials of a later date to select the present site of the Court House in the hole at the foot of Cadillac square, prompted a change in the location of the cemetery on Woodward avenue, to the more remote and then inaccessible location at Clinton Park. The approach to the Clinton Park Cemetery was over a narrow lane thirty feet wide, extending from Jefferson avenue. No cross streets were opened and there was no better approach to the cemetery for many years.

Francis P. Browning was one of the foremost men in the city at that time. He was engaged in many of the important ventures and was looked upon as a successful merchant and great confidence was placed in him. He purchased the lots on the corner of Larned and Griswold streets, now occupied by the old postoffice, the present United States custom house, and here erected a fine brick residence. His wife was a Miss Caroline Colt, daughter of Samuel D. Colt, of Pittsfield, Mass. Mr. Browning, although not a church member, took an active interest in church affairs and was one of the leaders in procuring for the Baptist church the lots owned and occupied by that society on the corner of Fort and Griswold streets now occupied by the Dime Bank building. In the midst of a very useful life he was suddenly cut off by the dreaded cholera in 1834. At the time of his death he was one of the principal owners of the steam mill at the foot of Woodward avenue.

In 1825 there were 58 buildings erected in the city, divided as follows:

Two-story buildings, 22.

Story and a half buildings, 17.

One-story buildings, 19.

The following appeared in *Detroit Courier*, May 1, 1833:

“The City.—With the return of Spring and the opening of lake navigation, have reappeared all those indications of business that are the life of growing places. Go into any part of the City, down by the waterside, back by the commons or along the magnificent avenue, and your eyes are greeted with anything but inactivity. Several fine buildings are already up—many more are under way in all directions—and we believe it is contemplated to erect three new churches during the season.

Most of our city merchants have either sent or gone east for their spring supplies; and we see no reason why the ensuing year should not witness an increase of business, commercial and mechanical, proportioned to the anticipated increase of population.”

On April 20, 1833, a resolution passed the Legislative Council,

“That a select committee be instructed to inquire into the expediency of establishing a Savings Bank to be styled the Savings Bank of Michigan, and that said Committee shall at any time have leave to report by bill or otherwise.”

It was not, however, until sixteen years later that the first savings bank, the present *Detroit Savings Bank*, was organized.

## POPULATION DOUBLES

The population more than doubled in the four years between 1830 and 1834. At the last mentioned date a census was taken with the following result:

Total white population . . . . .	4,448
Blacks . . . . .	138
Strangers in the city . . . . .	387

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Aggregate . . . . . 4,973

There were 12 schools in the city and the encouragement was held out that "in the coming season new dwellings, stores and churches, together with a new market house, will be erected."

All of these schools were private, select or parochial, not public schools.

Detroit was visited by the cholera in 1832 and again in 1834.

The financial statement from 1825 to 1834 showed that the city had received, principally from the sale of lots in the military reserve, in the ten years, \$57,620.66. It had expended during the same period, \$56,483.02. And had on hand, \$1,137.64.

It had, however, issued warrants and had corporation bills in circulation and a debt due to the Farmers' Insurance Company aggregating \$4,390.66, so that it had a considerable debt for so small a place.

A municipal ownership enthusiast in the Courier of November 13, 1833, thus demonstrated, to his satisfaction, the advisability of public ownership of the Central Railroad.

“A correspondent from Marshall advocates the building of a railroad from Detroit to the mouth of the St. Joseph River, through Wayne, Washtenaw, Jackson, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, Van Buren and Berrien counties, 175 miles. There would be 10,000 farmers reached by such a road who would contribute each 500 bushels of wheat, ten barrels of pork, making 5,000,000 bushels of wheat and 100,000 barrels of pork, besides 100,000 barrels of other goods and grains each year. The whole equal to 1,200,000 barrels in bulk of the value of \$5,000,000. To transport this from Detroit would employ between 300 and 400 vessels.

Let the government set apart the unsold lands for five miles on each side of the proposed road and sell the lands to pay for making the road as it progresses. This would make 1,120,000 acres, but some lands are already sold, so that, say 746,676 acres still remain undisposed of. These lands will increase in value to say \$5 per acre, or .....\$3,733,335  
Deduct cost of land at \$1.25 per acre..... 933,331

---

Increase of land by reason of the railroad.. 2,800,004  
175 miles of railroad will cost at \$10,000  
per mile . . . . . 1,750,000

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Surplus for constructing road..... 1,050,004

By this plan the railroad would become the property of the territory and the tolls could be made very low.”

It was within a very few years after this time, that Michigan undertook to carry out the ideas above set forth. The scheme failed and with its failure drew the state into the vortex of bankruptcy, repudiation and disgrace. Has this lesson been forgotten and will the people again go through the disgraceful failure of

municipal ownership that we passed through in the years from 1837 to 1847?

## NAVIGATION ON THE GREAT LAKES

During the entire period of territorial days in Michigan the lake navigation played a very important part in the progress of the country.

Practically all of the freight and much the larger portion of travelers reached Detroit and Michigan over the waters of Lake Erie. Those who returned eastward from Detroit generally went by boat. Only a few from the great number proceeded overland through Canada and a much smaller number passed overland through Ohio.

The lake traffic was quite extensive before the advent of the steam boat. The sail vessels of the period before 1830 were quite small, as we reckon vessels of a later date, but they were quite large for the time.

The General Gage was the largest vessel built by the English before 1796. It was of 154 tons burthen, and began to sail in 1772.

During the Revolutionary War there were quite a number of sail vessels, none larger than the Gage.

The British government compelled all freight to be carried up from Niagara in government vessels. There were many little boats like the Beaver and Weazel that carried on a coasting trade, but for many years the prohibition against carrying freight prevented the building of private boats of any considerable size, on the lakes.

After the Americans came in 1796, vessels began to multiply in number and to increase in size.

Silas Farmer in his history says that the first boat to carry the American flag was the Swan, owned by James May. This was in 1796. A writer in 1843 says that the Sloop Detroit, of 70 tons, was the first one to carry the flag in 1796.

In 1797 there was the schooner General Wilkinson of 80 tons.

There were two government boats in 1799, the John Adams and Tracey. In 1800 the Good Intent of 35 tons was put on the lakes. The next was the Nancy in 1805.

In 1806 the Contractor was built and in 1810 the Catherine came out. None of these exceeded 100 tons.

In the years 1817 and 1818 sixty vessels were on Lake Erie of a combined tonnage of 2180. Only two of this number exceeded 100 tons and those were the Michigan of 132 tons and the Union of 104 tons.

The first steamboat on Lake Erie was the Walk-in-the Water, (340 tons), so named from the Indian chief. The boat was built at Black Rock and reached Detroit on its first trip August 28, 1818. It was wrecked Nov. 21, 1821. Its successor was the Superior (300 tons) which arrived in Detroit in May, 1822. The Chippewa (100 tons) came in 1824, and in 1825 there were the Henry Clay (348 tons) and the Pioneer (230 tons). Three vessels were built in 1826, the Niagara (180 tons). William Penn (275 tons) and Enterprise (250 tons). From this time they began to multiply quite rapidly and by 1843 there had been all told 101 steamboats of 27,000 tons and of a value of \$3,510,000 on the upper lakes. The largest was the Great Western (780 tons)

which ran only one year and was burned at the wharf in Detroit. The Buffalo (613 tons), the Missouri (612 tons) and the Nile (600 tons) come next in size.

The Nile was wrecked by the explosion of her boiler, at the foot of Second street, Detroit.

Sail vessels increased rapidly in number during this time, but the tonnage did not equal that of the steamboats.

In 1841 twenty-four sailers came out. The largest was the brig Rosa of 165 tons.

In 1842, seventeen came out, of which the A. Winslow of 205 tons was the largest. The next year there were 13 new vessels, the Ashtabula of 250 tons being the largest. In 1841 it was estimated that there were in commission fifty steamboats and 300 sailing vessels.

In 1835 there were owned in Detroit:

13 steamboats, tonnage.....	1811
1 brig, tonnage.....	117
33 schooners, tonnage.....	2154
35 sloops, tonnage.....	831

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4913

Both the Argo and the General Brady were ferry boats at Detroit, and one authority states that the Brady was the first steam boat built at that place. It was of 100 tons burden and in charge of Capt. John Burtis. Burtis had a ferry boat in 1825 propelled by horses which is thus described in the Herald: "On Friday a handsome and commodious boat made its unexpected appearance on our river and was brought alongside Berthelet's wharf among the cheers of the multitude whom the novel spectacle had called to the spot."

The boat was built in Cleveland by Capt. Burtis. It was 50 feet long by 37 feet beam, with double keel, between which the paddles were plied. It was calculated for six horses and was intended to ply between Detroit and the Canadian shore." The number of people carried by the boats is frequently mentioned in the newspapers. The Courier of May 21, 1834, contains this item: "Our streets are again thronging with life and crowds of emigrants are daily arriving." "On Friday and Saturday of the past week, alone, not less than 2000 strangers arrived in the different boats at our wharves."

The first attempt at running a regular line of boats from Detroit to Chicago, was made in May, 1834.

#### 1835 IS BIG YEAR

The year 1835 saw many new things in our city and state. The opening of the new academy on the site of the present city hall; the erection of the new city hall and market building; arrangements for the entrance of two railroads, the Detroit and St. Joseph (now called the Michigan Central) and the Detroit and Pontiac (now called the Grand Trunk) into the city; the calling of a constitutional convention, adoption of a constitution and election of state officers; the demand that Michigan be admitted into the union as a state.

These and many other important events occurred in 1835.

The Free Press, in January, 1836, referring to the two railroads about to enter the city, said:

"Real estate is still rising in value. Since the ef-



ficient action in relation to the Detroit & St. Joseph railroad much property has changed hands. Sales have been effected at and near the termination of the road and in the upper part of the city to the amount of \$75,000 within a few days, the terms of sale being, in most instances, one-third to one-half cash, and the time only six months or a year, shows that there is no fictitious value. Should the Pontiac railroad be completed, the lots near its termination will, of course, increase some three or four hundred per cent."

#### THE BUSINESS CENTER

It is somewhat curious at this time to note the location of business in Detroit in 1835-6. The center of trade had been at the foot of Randolph street, or at least below Jefferson avenue on that street. Gradually business had reached Jefferson avenue, but was largely confined to the streets below that avenue and extending to Woodward avenue. When it was proposed to put the new market building and city hall in the center of Michigan Grand avenue (now Cadillac square), facing the Campus Martius, it was seriously objected to on the ground that it was too far out. The location, however, was selected and very soon the National hotel was built on the site of the present Hotel Pontchartrain. This greatly encouraged the people to acquiesce in the selection of the site for the city hall. In the newspaper article above referred to, the "upper part of the city" meant the lots on the north side of Michigan avenue where the Majestic building now stands, and the lots across the street, occupied by the Detroit Opera House, and other lots in the immediate neighborhood.

The Central Railroad occupied the Woodward and Michigan avenue sides of the present city hall site for many years and the Pontiac Railroad depot was on the site of the Detroit Opera House, the track being laid down Gratiot avenue and terminating on the south side of that street opposite the Hudson building.

The Free Press of Dec. 23, 1835, has this to say:

“The railroad subject is all the go at the last. Business of Detroit has greatly increased the last year. Hundreds of dwellings and stores would be immediately tenanted if erected.” “From the view of our windows we observe 24 large three-story stores have been completed and are now all profitably occupied. Jefferson avenue has become the Pearl street of the west. While Buffalo boasts of her rapid improvement, Cleveland of her increase on population; with due deference it must be acknowledged that Detroit has outdone them.”

The Free Press office was at 63 Jefferson avenue.

#### TAXATION IN EARLY TIMES

Intimately connected with the buying and selling of real estate is the matter of taxation. Taxes have been levied from the very earliest time, and must continue to be levied as long as civilization exists. There are certain duties that must be performed by the public authorities for the benefit of communities in settlements, villages and cities. The larger the settlements grow in population, the greater are the demands for public improvements. In the early Detroit the streets were very narrow and it was neither an inconvenience nor a hardship to compel every citizen to keep the street adjacent to his premises in good order. There

were no sewers, but there were regulations for keeping premises in order, supplying fire buckets for use in case of fire, for keeping chimneys in repair and for other like measures that affected every one in the village. When these village rules were violated the guilty parties were brought before the magistrate and fined, and these fines—although they were trivial—were a source of revenue. The most important public concern in the old village was that of keeping the palisade, or picket line, around the town in repair. In 1750 each citizen was compelled to furnish annually one picket for each front foot of ground he owned in the fort. He also paid two sols per foot quit rent. The sol was a cent—the smallest coin in common use in the community. The pickets so furnished were sufficient to keep the palisade in good repair and the two sols were used for paying for the planting of the pickets, keeping the village gates up and such public work. The village officers received no salary and the pay they got was in the way of fees. When the British troops were first brought to Detroit, in 1760, a tax of one cord of wood per acre was levied upon the farms. This wood was used for the soldiers in the fort. Under the first years of British rule taxes rose enormously. In 1763 the entire tax of the settlement, both the village and the farm lands, was £184 13s 4d. So much complaint was made that the next year it was reduced to £158.

## TAXES ONE SHILLING PER FOOT

In 1768 the village tax was placed at one shilling per foot. The people were unable to pay so much money, and the burden was more than they could stand. A committee was appointed to see the commandant and obtain relief. A large part of the tax was remitted. The tax roll for the year 1771 shows that in the village the tax levy was 456 livres, 2 sols, equal to £30 8s 1½d. There is on record in the office of the register of deeds a tax receipt given by order of Maj. Henry Basset, Feb. 28, 1773, for three bushels (minots) of wheat and 24 livres, 12 sols, in money for a farm four arpents in width by 20 in depth. The farm for which this tax was paid is now known as the Porter farm, at Twenty-fourth street.

After the revolutionary war was over the garrison was reduced, and the tax for furnishing wood was abated in part. The palisade was not kept in repair, so that while the taxes were lightened somewhat, the protection to the town was allowed to decay.

The first tax law of the Northwest Territory that affected Detroit was passed Dec. 19, 1799. This provided that all farm lands should be divided into three classes, according to the quality of the soil and the improvements on it. There should be annually levied on each 100 acres, 85 cents for land of the first class, 60 cents for land of the second class, and 25 cents for land of the third class. As a farmer seldom owned more than 200 acres, the ordinary tax per individual could not have exceeded \$2 per year, and yet this tax was deemed so burdensome that in 1802 it was reduced so that each

100 acres of first class land should pay 60 cents, and the same quantity of second class land should pay but 40 cents. The third class land remained at 25 cents per hundred acres. Horses were taxed at 50 cents each, and cattle at  $12\frac{1}{2}$  cents. A bond servant, or slave, was taxed \$1 and single men (unmarried men) not more than \$2 and not less than 50 cents each, according to their ability to pay.

#### NEW CODE ADOPTED

In the village, taxes were levied at the rate of 50 cents for each \$100 of value, and this rate held for mills and other improvements outside of the village inclosure.

These were the taxes provided at the time the territory of Michigan was organized in 1805.

Very soon after the organization of the governor and judges as a legislative body in 1805, the Woodward code of laws was adopted. The act of Sept. 10, 1805, provides for a specific tax on carriages of \$1 for every wheel, on sleighs of \$2, on horses of from \$1 to \$3, on dogs 50 cents for the first, \$1 for the second and 50 cents for each additional dog.

No taxes were levied on real estate under the Woodward code, nor was any sort of tax law passed until Jan. 17, 1809. Under this act improved lands were assessed at \$1.75 per acre and orchards at \$10 per acre. Every house of the value of \$200 was assessed at 2 per cent of its value. Personal property was assessed at various sums. Clocks and gold watches at \$10 each, and other watches at \$3. It is recorded that

Archibald Horner, a cabinet maker, was the owner of a diamond, the only one in town, and he was assessed for the jewel.

When it was ascertained how much it would be necessary to raise by taxation each year, the sum was apportioned according to the value of the property in the county at the valuations as above specified. This is practically our present form of levying taxes, except that the value of each parcel is fixed for itself and not by any rule.

If the taxes were not paid within the proper time, the personal property of the owner could be distrained and sold.

#### PROPERTY APPRAISED

In 1817 it was provided that the real estate should be equitably appraised and the taxes should be spread on the roll in proportion to the assessed value, but the rate should not exceed one-half of 1 per cent. This rate was changed in 1828 so that in Wayne and Monroe counties it was fixed at one-fourth of 1 per cent and in other counties at one-half of 1 per cent. No provision was made in the early laws for assessing property at its real value. In effect the amount of the tax levy was first ascertained and then the valuations were arranged so that at the rate of one-half of 1 per cent the requisite amount was raised. There were a lot of licenses, poll taxes and others that could always be relied upon to help out in an emergency.

In 1829 the rate for Wayne county was raised to one-half of 1 per cent. There was no specific pro-

vision made for the collection of county taxes in Detroit until April 13, 1827. The act of that date provides that the taxes of the city were to be collected as in other parts of the county, and should be paid to the county treasurer.

In the new charter of 1824 provision was made for levying a tax to be voted upon at a meeting of the freemen of the city. The amount of this tax could never exceed one-fourth of 1 per cent of the assessed value of the real and personal property on the assessment rolls.

#### CITIZENS MEETINGS

The citizens or freemen's meetings were the source of all authority for levying taxes. The people were called together at least once each year, and sometimes several times a year, to vote on the amount of taxes to be raised. The items for which moneys were needed were submitted to the meeting and voted upon. In the early days when the city was small this worked very well, but as the city grew in population the citizens lost interest in the subject. A few only would attend the meetings—sometimes a few only could be accommodated in the hall or meeting place. These few represented themselves as the "citizens of Detroit," and they frequently misrepresented.

The law at first fixed the tax rate at  $\frac{1}{2}$  of 1 per cent, and later it was provided that the citizens might, if they so voted, raise an annual and additional sum of \$8,000 per year to pay interest on the city debt. After a time the rate was raised to 1 per cent, and

finally it was limited to 2 per cent. It practically so stands at the present time, but the chicanery of law has evaded the provision by excluding the school tax and some other taxes from the 2 per cent limitation.

#### FIRST BOARD OF ESTIMATES

The freemen's meeting was superseded some years ago (1873) by the formation of the board of estimates.

The Board of Estimates still remains but was greatly altered by a vote of the citizens in 1916.

#### CITY INDEPENDENT OF TAXATION

Twice during the existence of the city it has been the owner of sufficient property to have maintained itself for all time, if not entirely free from taxation, at least subject only to a nominal tax.

After the fire of 1805 the general government donated to the city of Detroit all of the land known as the "Governor and Judges plan," extending from Griswold street to Randolph street, from the river to Adams avenue; all of the "park lots" extending from Adams avenue to the railroad south of the boulevard, and 10,000 acres north of the present boulevard, called the "Ten Thousand Acre Tract." Each of the residents in the new town before the fire was entitled to a donation lot in the new town. Out of the sale of the remaining lots the city was to build a court house and jail.

After all obligations attached to the grant had been paid, a large amount of property was left. The city



authorities, instead of preserving the residue as a nucleus for a fund to be used for public purposes in the future, sat quietly down and ate up the donation—paying the running expenses of the city government from the principal of this great gift. No taxes of importance were levied until the city awoke from its dream of fortune to find its property dissipated and gone.

#### GIVEN MILITARY RESERVE

A further and very large present was made to the city in 1826 when the military reserve was turned over to it. Again the great good fortune of the city turned the heads of the people and they frittered away and ate up a fortune which, if it had been husbanded and preserved, would have placed our city for all time above want.

But these are not the only foolish things the city authorities have done in the past.

In 1835 the city was nearly out of debt. It had never been in debt to any considerable extent. It had no permanent improvements of any account excepting the capitol building and the jail, and these had been paid for from the sale of city lands. The new city hall cost about \$9,000 in the first place and with additions cost about \$20,000. This was partly paid by taxation and partly paid in city scrip. The city debt was represented by this city scrip, which was not excessive in amount, and which passed as currency.

## FIRST CITY BONDS

The "good times" of 1835 set some of the people at work trying to find out some way in which they could get the city into debt. We have a number of that class of people in Detroit at the present time, and they had some of them in 1835. The water works, or hydraulic system, was then owned by private parties. The "municipal ownership" enthusiasts of that day proposed that the city should buy the waterworks. The city had no money, so it was proposed to ask the legislative council for permission to bond the city for the purpose of raising the necessary funds. The city had never issued any bonds.

## MUNICIPAL OWNERSHIP

It was known that the waterworks could be bought for about \$25,000.

On an application to the legislative council permission was granted to the city to bond itself for \$100,000. Half of this amount was to be used for buying the waterworks and extending the system and the other half for building common sewers.

To the citizens in general money raised by the issue of bonds is just like finding it. They never reckon that they have to pay it back—it must be paid by their descendants—and what do they care about posterity?

## VOTE \$100,000 BONDS

A freemen's meeting was called on June 5, 1835, and a few men, styling themselves the "citizens of Detroit," readily voted to raise the entire \$100,000 by the sale of bonds. A few days later the common council ordered the bonds issued, and instructed Henry S. Cole, then a prominent attorney of the city, to go east and dispose of them. Mr. Cole was sick at the time (he died a short time later), and he declined the appointment. Charles C. Trowbridge, president of the Bank of Michigan, was selected to take the job offered to Mr. Cole.

When the bonds were first authorized to be issued, the rate of interest they bore was fixed at 5 per cent. Mr. Trowbridge visited New York, Boston and Philadelphia in an earnest effort to sell the bonds, and was entirely unsuccessful. He spent the time from July until October in this fruitless work and finally gave it up. His bill of expenses ultimately allowed by the council was \$245.89. One of the difficulties he met with was the rate of interest.

Detroit bonds could not be floated at 5 per cent. The city authorities did not know what to do. They wanted to spend the money and were troubled because they could not get it to spend.

## BUYS ENTIRE BOND ISSUE

After Mr. Trowbridge returned from his trip down east, he was called upon by Oliver Newberry. "Admiral of the Lakes" everybody called him. Mr. Newberry said that he would take the entire bond issue of \$100,000 at 6 per cent if the city would accept the money in five installments, reaching over about a year. There was no hesitation on the part of the city to accept Mr. Newberry's offer. People did not know that Mr. Newberry had so much money, but the plan, as he carried it out, was to purchase an installment of bonds and place them on sale in New York. They were all disposed of at a profit and the money was ready for the subsequent installments, just as he had agreed. He saved the day for the city.

Being now possessed of a lot of money, the city proceeded to get rid of it. The water works were purchased for about \$25,000, and a new site at the foot of Orleans street was selected. This site cost over \$5,500, and extensive improvements were at once made or planned, so that nearly all the first \$50,000 was used in that way.

## LEVI COOK NEW MAYOR

There was a city election in the spring of 1836, and Levi Cook became the new mayor. Something prompted Mr. Cook to try to tie up the other \$50,000 so that it should only be used for the purposes for which it was originally intended—namely, for the building of common sewers.

Mayor Cook introduced in the council, on May 4, 1836, and had adopted, a resolution “that the unexpended balance on the loan of \$50,000 authorized by the legislative council, be and is hereby especially appropriated for the construction of permanent sewers through the city, and that the treasurer be directed to draw upon the same for no other purpose.”

Notwithstanding this resolution, the well-grounded fears of Mr. Cook became a reality. This was just the time that the Michigan Central railroad was becoming prominent in state affairs.

## MICHIGAN TO BECOME A STATE

The leading topic of discussion throughout the state in 1835, 1836 and 1837 was that of the admission of Michigan into the union. Michigan claimed admittance as a matter of right in the fall of 1835 and adopted a state constitution, elected a governor and other state officers and refused to elect territorial officers, or to recognize the territorial form of government provided by congress. Congress disregarded the application for admission and it was not until January, 1837, that Michigan formally became a state.

One of the objects that Michigan and its friends had in forcing congress to recognize its statehood was to allow the state to participate in the distribution of funds of the general government that had accumulated and were not required for present expenditure and were about to be divided among the states.

#### FIRST RAILROAD INCORPORATED

Some time before this the Michigan Central railroad—then called the Detroit & St. Joseph railroad—was incorporated as a privately-owned organization. The railroad was projected in 1830 and incorporated in 1832. The first officers were John Biddle, president, and De Garmo Jones, Oliver Newberry, Edmund A. Brush, Benjamin B. Kercheval, Eurotas P. Hastings, J. Burdick, Mark Norris, David Page and Samuel W. Dexter, directors. It was one of the earliest railroad organizations in the United States. Its route was from Detroit across the state to St. Joseph on Lake Michigan, whence communication was to be had with Chicago by boat. Chicago at this time was just beginning to find itself on the map.

The great good that would come to the state from the running of this and the other projected railroads was advertised all over the state and all over the United States, and was one of the excitements of the day.

A meeting of Detroit citizens was called, in December, 1835, to aid in the sale of stock of the company. The Free Press of December 14, 1835, says:

“It would seem that the people of Detroit cannot but realize that the continued prosperity of the city is most

evidently identified with the immediate construction of the Detroit & St. Joseph railroad."

The city was divided into wards and prominent citizens were chosen to solicit subscriptions in each ward. Robert E. Roberts and Elon Farnsworth were appointed in the First ward; John Palmer and James Williams in the Second ward; John Garrison and Peter J. Desnoyers in the Third ward; Levi Brown and Thomas Palmer in the Fourth ward, and Charles Moran and Justin Rice in the Fifth ward.

The secretary of the railroad company, Charles C. Trowbridge, reported that the subscription to Dec. 21, 1835, amounted to \$112,000, of which \$55,000 was subscribed in Detroit, \$15,000 in Ann Arbor, \$15,000 in Ypsilanti and \$4,000 in Marshall.

#### PROTEST PRIVATE OWNERSHIP

Some people thought the railroad should be owned by the state and that the legislative council had done a grievous wrong in permitting a private corporation to organize such a public utility.

A public meeting was called on Jan. 16, 1836, to protest against the act of the legislative council, in granting to private parties the "right of constructing a railroad across the peninsula of Michigan."

"Contrary to the great interests of the people, it is an infringement of legislative right, and demands to be corrected by succeeding legislatures."

The legislature was in session in the summer of that year and a joint resolution was passed July 26, re-

questing the governor (Stevens T. Mason) to receive proposals from the railroad company to sell its interests to the state. As the legislature adjourned before anything along this line was accomplished, the road continued the work of grading its track.

The contract for grubbing the first six and one-half miles of the track westward from the city was let at "King's Corner"\* on the 18th of May and thus the work was actually commenced. Great difficulty was encountered in obtaining the right of way for the road. People were not willing to donate their lands, and when settlements were made with the land owners the prices demanded and paid were so great that it was seriously considered to abandon the project entirely.

Finally on July 17, 1836, the stockholders held a meeting to discuss the abandonment, and it was then proposed to ask permission of the state to occupy the Chicago road (Michigan avenue) for a right of way for the railroad track.

#### SUSPEND WORK ON ROAD

Work was suspended on the road for some time. Many public meetings were held. The people generally were willing to aid an enterprise which, it was conceded, would be very profitable in a short time.

The citizens, or some of them, thought the city should contribute to aid the railroad. Mayor Cook was

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\* "King's Corner" was the southeast corner of Jefferson and Woodward avenues, so-called from the owner, Jonathan L. King. The southwest corner of the same street was called Curry's corner from the owner, Charles Curry.



much in favor of the road and worked for its success, but thought the city, as a municipality, should not become involved in its construction. He was compelled to leave the city for a considerable time and gave notice of his intention on July 22, 1836. Shortly after this he left the city, and on Aug. 5, the common council passed the following resolution:

“Resolved that the recorder, now acting mayor of the city, be and he is hereby authorized and empowered to subscribe \$10,000 to the stock of the Detroit & St. Joseph Railroad Company, for and in behalf of the corporation of the city of Detroit.”

Thus one-fifth of the entire amount of the remaining bond issue was disposed of.

#### CITY BUYS RAILROAD STOCK

The friends of the railroad were greatly elated at this action of the council. The paper of the same date says: “It is a calumny upon the inhabitants of this city to suppose that they will, by any act of theirs, allow the progress of the Detroit & St. Joseph railroad to be again long suspended.

Ten days later another resolution was put through the council, directing the recorder to subscribe for \$40,000 more of the stock of the same railroad.

The entire \$50,000 of bonds intended to be issued for sewers, was diverted from its proper course, and subscribed for other purposes. It was only by good fortune, that any of the fund was ultimately restored to its proper uses.

The next session of the legislature began at Detroit in January, 1837. Governor Mason in his message, said that he had requested the Detroit & St. Joseph railroad to submit a proposition to him for the sale of their charter. The stockholders of the railroad agreed to surrender their stock upon repayment of the sums advanced, "under such an arrangement as will secure the completion of the work within a reasonable time."

#### STATE TAKES CONTROL

Governor Mason's first plan was not to buy the road outright, but to purchase a controlling interest in it. The legislature, refusing to accept the plans of a better balanced mind than their own, created a commission on internal improvements and authorized it to purchase the road. Bonds of the state were issued to pay the original stockholders and to complete the work. The amount of money that had been paid by the city was repaid to it on May 16, 1837. The city itself lost no money by reason of its subscription to the railroad, but the state was not so fortunate. The \$5,000,000 in bonds which the state had issued were stolen or dissipated within a few years and the work was not completed.

Only a small sum remained unexpended when the commission made its report in 1840. The commissioners, in this report stated that they had not money enough to complete their work and that it would be necessary to abandon most of it and complete a little.

"If this is not done," they said, "the entire work will have to be abandoned in a short time. In other

words, we have nothing for it but to reconcile our minds to the utter prostration and ruin of the state."

"We have expended or wasted, three-fifth of our \$5,-000,000 loan, and what have we to show for it?" Not more than 50 miles of the central road was completed.

Up to that time the total amount of expenditures was \$13,897.92 in excess of the appropriations and the situation was growing worse every day.

#### MORE MONEY GRANTED

Notwithstanding the discouraging statement, the state appropriated \$450,000 for continuing the work. The depot in the city was located on the site of the present city hall, on the Michigan avenue side, and a track was laid down Woodward avenue to the river to assist shippers in reaching the wharves. The grade at Jefferson avenue (although sunk nearly below the roadway) was so heavy that the cars could be hauled up only with the greatest difficulty. The track was practically useless and was taken up in 1842.

The road was completed to Dexter, but could not compete with the stage lines from Ann Arbor west, and no more income was derived by the road than had been derived in the previous year when the road ended at Ann Arbor. The commissioners reported in 1842 that when the road was completed to Jackson it would overcome the stage competition.

The legislature directed the commissioners not to enter into new contracts for work on the road, but to carry all old contracts out to completion.

## SALE IS DISCUSSED

In 1845 the sale of the railroad by the state was discussed to some extent, but nothing was done to bring it about. In 1846 Governor Alpheus Felch took up the matter and discussed it at length in his annual message. Every report of the department of internal improvements had shown the great increase in the income of the railroad over the previous year, and every report had shown a net surplus of from \$50,000 to \$150,000 per year.

## FALSIFYING PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

No account, however, had ever been submitted that included any item for depreciation or for interest on investment. No one who studied the report would be deceived by these misleading statements. The general public only found out that the road was not paying expenses, when they found their taxes were yearly increased to pay the expenses of a bankrupt and failing institution.

The total cost of the Central railroad up to the first day of January, 1846, deducting all receipts, was \$2,238,289.72. This sum only included 10 per cent for depreciation. It cost more to send a bushel of wheat by railroad than it would cost to send the same amount by horse and wagon.

## ROAD SOLD FOR \$2,000,000

Governor Felch, in advocating the sale of the road, said:

“The conducting by the state of such works, involves the ordinary hazard attending the ownership of large amounts of property, the necessary risk of extensive business operations and the employment of numerous officers, agents and laborers, who are paid from avails belonging to the public treasury.

“The business of transporting passengers and freight by railroad is clearly not within the ordinary designs of a state government, and it is believed that that system is best which is the most strictly confined to its necessary and simple duties, and participates least in the matter of ordinary business. A sale of these works would have the effect to simplify the operations of the state, to reduce the number of officers and servants in its employ, and to render less complicated the whole machinery of government.”

The matter of the sale of the property was by the legislature referred to committees, and their reports are interesting and instructive. The committee on finance, in the course of its report, referred to the opinions of some that the railroad, if in private hands, would soon become so large and employ so many people, that it would become a menace to the state. The committee pointed out that if the concern remained the property of the state it would employ just as many persons, and then this great army of engineers, firemen, agents, runners, surveyors, appraisers and commissioners and the superintending of all the financial concerns of this vast system, would indeed form a nucleus

around which would gather a horde of greedy, half-starved, political hacks, whose sole aim would be self-aggrandizement—in whose midst corruption, intrigue and deception would riot in unlimited freedom.

The state offered to sell the road for \$2,000,000, reserving the buildings at Detroit, which were on public property. On Sept. 23, 1846, the Michigan Central railroad, then incorporated, made its first payment to apply on the purchase of the road at the price fixed by the legislature of \$2,000,000. A part of this payment was made in state scrip a face value, which the railroad purchased at about 80 cents on the dollar.

#### STATE SAVED FROM REPUDIATION

The state was saved from repudiation of its debt and from bankruptcy.

The act for the incorporation of the Michigan Central Railroad Company was passed March 28, 1846. The incorporators were from New York and New England. Among the incorporators were William Sturges, John E. Thayer, Josiah Quincy Jr., Erastus Corning, John Carter Brown and Rufus H. King.

There was a census of the city taken by Noah Sutton in February, 1836.

According to his report there were in the city:

Men .....	3815
Women .....	3112
<hr/>	
Total .....	6927
Brick buildings 4 stories high .....	22

Brick buildings 3 stories high .....	21
Brick buildings 2 stories high .....	12
<hr/>	
Total .....	55
Frame Stores .....	140
Frame dwellings .....	774
Brick dwellings .....	39
<hr/>	
Total dwellings .....	953
Total buildings .....	1008
Building erected during the past year .....	251

#### PROSPERITY OF THE CITY IN 1836

The year 1836 was a busy year for the city. The rush of immigrants from the east began early in the season. The news items convey some idea of the excitement that was prevalent. The Free Press of Jan. 20, 1836, has this:

“Real estate.—Land speculations for a few days past have been large and frequent. Never have the prospects of this city been so flattering as at present. Such is the ordinary bustle of business that we forget how much we are really bound up by the cold and ice of winter. Spring, with its reviving energies, seems to have anticipated us.

“Six acres, on the Gouin farm sold last week for \$12,000, and that part of the Riopelle farm lying between Jefferson and Gratiot avenues, sold yesterday for \$50,000 to Buel & Bacon.” (Alexander H. Buel and Marshal J. Bacon.)

Nearly every issue of the paper contained some item of extensive real estate sales, new buildings, and the

dearth of buildings that were needed and might be used. The city was growing too fast to be taken care of.

#### MANY REALTY DEALS NOTED

This appeared Jan. 26, 1836:

"City speculations—real estate to the amount of \$64,000 changed hands on Saturday. Real estate sales in the city for the last month have exceeded \$350,000."

Feb. 18, the following appeared: "It is not our purpose or intention to bolster up, by exaggerated accounts, predicted from rumor alone, the legitimate advances of real estate in Detroit. As a proof of the rapidly increasing prosperity of our city we would instance a sale of 10 acres of land situate upwards of one mile from the Detroit river, on the Pontiac road without any buildings upon it, for \$1,000 per acre. This, as all other sales which have come to our knowledge, indicates more clearly the real prosperity of our city, as in almost every instance a large portion of the purchase price is paid down."



## NATIONAL HOTEL

March 24, 1836, the following appeared in the paper.

“New Hotel—We are gratified to learn that a large and commodious brick hotel will be commenced immediately, on the southeast corner of Military Square in this city, next to the new market and city hall. It will be ready for the inspection of travelers on the first of September. Extensive and convenient stabling will be attached to the establishment.”

And a few days later we find this article:

May 5, 1836.

“The cry is *Still They Come*. The arrival of the first steam boats from Buffalo have made a very sensible difference in the animation and bustle of our city. Our numerous public houses are filled to overflowing with enterprising and enthusiastic emigrants to the fertile plains of our beautiful peninsula.

The number of passengers who came up in the Webster, New York and United States, if embodied and well equipped, would form an army, powerful enough to conquer Texas. We have been happy to perceive that a very large proportion of those who have already come in this spring are actual settlers. If emigration continues during the season as it has begun, Michigan will soon be able, if she pleases, to boast of her million of freemen.”

Not least among the improvements in the city during the years 1835 and 1836, was the filling in of the Cass farm front. Something has been said about that work in another publication and there will be given here only an outline of the work and some new matter.

## THE CASS COMPANY

In 1835 the line of the river on the Cass farm ran not far from the present Larned street. Behind it was a hill and in front the water of the river with several small islands. The filling in of this water front was a great task. The land had been purchased of Gen. Cass by Oliver Newberry, Shubael Conant, De Garmo Jones and a number of other wealthy citizens, who formed the "Cass Company." The land was purchased in 1835 and in August a contract for grading the embankment was made, of which the following is a copy:

"Article of agreement made the twenty-second of August, 1835, between Abraham Smolk, of the city of Detroit, M. T. and Augustus S. Porter, trustee of the Cass Company, so-called, of said city, witnesses: That the said Smolk doth covenant and agree with the said Porter, for the consideration hereinafter mentioned, to excavate and remove all the earth from the bank in front of the Cass farm in the city of Detroit, and embank and grade the entire water front of said farm; that is to say, the entire premises, land and water conveyed by Lewis Cass to the Cass company, so-called, according to a plan made by John Mullett and in accordance with the plan adopted and sanctioned by the common council of the said city of Detroit. The said contractor shall commence the said work upon the north side of Larned street and shall excavate and remove the earth therefrom and well and permanently grade the said north side of Larned street according to the plans aforesaid and complete that portion of the said grading on or before the first day of November, next. The said contractor shall excavate, embank, fill up and well and

permanently grade and finish, in accordance with said plans, the whole of said front of said Cass farm (being the premises so as aforesaid conveyed by the said Lewis Cass to the said Cass company, as by reference to their deed may appear) on or before the first day of March, next, it being understood, however, that the contractor is not, nor shall not be required to furnish any earth for embankment and grading exclusive of the earth embraced within the premises herein mentioned.

“And the said Augustus S. Porter, trustee as aforesaid, covenants and agrees with the said Abraham Smolk to pay him at and after the rate of eighty cents per cord of earth for the whole of said work, to be paid as follows, viz: At the expiration of each month from the commencement of said work, the said Porter shall pay to the said contractor at least three-fourths of the estimated value of so much of said work as may be then completed according to the rate aforesaid, to be determined by disinterested persons, one to be chosen by each party, who, in case of disagreement, may choose an umpire, so that at least one-fourth of the entire amount, so as above covenanted to be paid to the said contractor, shall and may be reserved until the full and final completion of the said contract according to its terms. And it is further mutually covenanted by the parties that if the said Porter shall, for the purpose of enabling the said contractor to commence with promptness and prosecute with greater vigor the said work, advance to the said contractor any sums of money for the purchase of cattle, horses, tools or any other necessary matter or thing relating to this contract, all such purchases shall be made in the name of said Porter, and that he, the said Porter, shall have the en-

tire and exclusive ownership thereof and the control and disposition thereof until the amount thereof shall be allowed to the said contractor and applied on account of the said contract in manner hereinbefore provided, at which time the ownership thereof shall vest in the said contractor.

And for the security on either part for the faithful performance of this contract, Shubael Conant, on behalf of said Smolk, and Enoch Jones, on behalf of said Porter, have, with the parties aforesaid, executed these presents, the day and year aforesaid.

Abraham Smolk.

A. S. Porter.

Shubael Conant.

Enoch Jones.”

The bills rendered for some of this work in 1835 show that a man with an ox team was paid 12 shillings per day and a man with a span of horses got 24 shillings. In 1837 the ox teams were paid \$2 per day.

#### SMOLK CAME HERE IN 1833

Abraham Smolk was born near Johnstown, N. Y., Jan. 25, 1780, just a few years after the death of Sir William Johnson, and while the war of the revolution was still in progress. As a young man, in 1805, he went to Auburn, N. Y., where he lived for many years. He came to Detroit in 1833, and contracted for all kinds of work of the nature of the agreement above. He employed a good many men at the work of filling in the Cass farm front. These men were mostly foreigners and some of them not of the best quality as citizens.

## BRADY GUARDS

Gen. Friend Palmer recalls an incident of this time as follows: "In 1835 a force of 100 men or more was employed in grading down the high river bank in front of the Cass farm. One day having been given an unlimited amount of whisky, they got into a fight. They were too drunk to do much injury to each other, but blood flowed freely. The sheriff's posse was powerless to stop the fight or make arrests, and as there was no military organization to call upon, there was nothing to do but to let them fight it out, until night put an end to the battle. This disgraceful scene showed the importance of having a military company to call upon in such cases."

The effect of the riot was the formation of the Brady Guards early in 1836.

On the front of the Cass farm, and almost on the river bank, was the residence of Gov. Cass. This building became the property of Mr. Smolk and was moved to the north side of Larned street and fixed over to form a double tenement.

## BUILD NEW HOTEL

In the Free Press of March 23, 1836, is a statement that the owners of the Cass front were "making preparations for the erection of a splendid hotel on the site of Gov. Cass' old residence." If the hotel, in later years called the Cass House, the site of the present Wayne Hotel, was the building above mentioned, then it would appear that Gen. Cass' house stood on the southeast corner of Jefferson avenue and Third street.

## CASS HOUSE

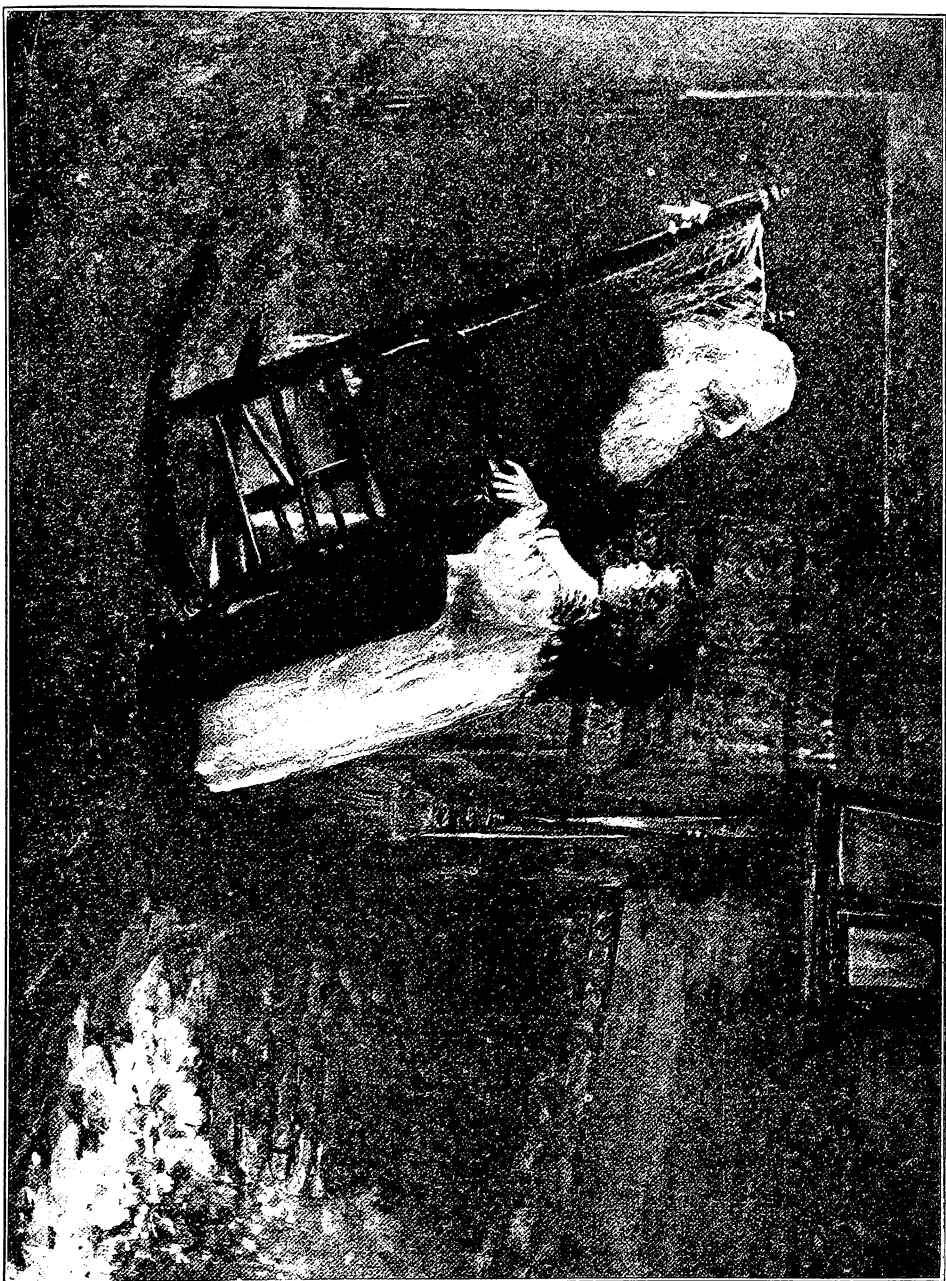
It was in this house of Gen. Cass that Gov. George B. Porter died in 1834, being suddenly taken ill as he was going down the river road to see the work then being done on his mansion on that road, near Twenty-fourth street.

After the work of filling in the Cass farm front was ended, Smolk was engaged in other contract work. It is said that he was one of the contractors for building the first 30 miles of the Michigan Central Railroad, and that he constructed a large portion of the Detroit and Howell plank road. He was in partnership with Samuel Pitts (as Pitts & Smolk), in 1839, in cutting and delivering ice in Detroit.

Like many other business men of the years of depression that followed 1836, he was forced to take advantage of the bankrupt act of 1843. He was then 63 years old. His son, George, kept a livery stable on the grounds now covered by the Union Trust Co.'s building before the Howard house was erected.



ABRAHAM SMOLK AND HIS GREAT GRANDDAUGHTER, GERTRUDE KANE.







## LIVED OVER 100 YEARS

Abraham Smolk lived during many of the later years of his life with his daughter, Mrs. Frank, on Mackinac Island, where he died July 9, 1881, aged 100 years and 7 months.

The picture herewith inserted is from a photograph of Abraham Smolk and his great granddaughter, Miss Gertrude Kane. It was made in 1880 when he was 100 years old. It might well be called Old Age and Youth.

## BY-GONES OF DETROIT

George C. Bates, a prominent lawyer for many years in this city, in a series of articles on the "By-Gones of Detroit," dwells entertainingly on the flush times of 1835 and 1836. "Everything was on the mountain wave of success. One had only to obtain the refusal of a piece of land on Jefferson avenue and to find a purchaser, who was always at hand, to become rich in a single summer."

He said that he, "a young, curly-haired enthusiast," made and had in bank between May, 1834, and May, 1836, \$17,000. "Nearly everybody became wild and extravagant on the strength of fancied wealth; at the hotels champagne took the place of water, and bottles popped and cracked like pistols in California."

It was planned to buy the Reeder farm (private.

claim 39, near the fort) for \$150,000 and lay out a city there as a rival to Detroit, but the title to the property was found to be defective.

“But while the streets were full, and the hotels were full and the land offices were full of such financial sellers, the young merchants of Detroit of that day, with here and there an exception, were level headed, and being possessed of sterling principles, sound judgment, discriminating minds, they foresaw the future bankruptcy and explosion of all this speculative folly, and so they avoided it.”

#### WILD SPECULATIONS IN 1836

In 1836 was inaugurated a species of speculation that was extensive, wild and disastrous. The mania for buying village lots became so rabid that in many instances farm lands in the country, remote from villages, were platted into small lots and placed upon the market, and some of the lots sold. Purchasers never expected to use these lots themselves, but hoped to be able to turn them over to some other speculator at an advance on the first price. So the merry game went on, always upward, until the end came with a crash and the Court of Bankruptcy followed in the wake. All over Wayne County—in fact all over the State of Michigan—these paper towns appeared over night. They lasted but a few days and the land reverted to its original use for farm purposes.

The Village of Cassandra, laid out by Judge Benjamin F. H. Witherell in 1836 is now and has been since 1837, a farm. It lies in the township of Greenfield outside of the present boundaries of Highland Park. (By the

recent vote it was included within the corporate limits of Detroit, 1916). In 1836 the owners of the property "salted" it by drawing on the land a load of iron ore which they scattered over the ground. They then advertised the property as being very valuable because iron had been found on it and it was proposed to open iron mines.

The village of Catville—so named from the initials of the owner of the property—Charles A. Trowbridge—was laid out as a city in 1836. It is now the village of New Boston. Within the limits of the present City of Detroit, was laid out the City of Belgrade. The land long since has ceased to bear evidence of this early plat and the present owners are scarcely aware that they live upon the remains of that ancient city.

Belgrade was owned by Henry M. Campbell—father of the late Judge James V. Campbell, and Thomas Clark. It was located on Jefferson avenue west, a short distance west of the Dearborn road, in the later village of Delray, now in the city limits.

These are only a few of the many villages and cities that were born in 1836 and died the following year.

With the passing of 1836 into the subsequent years, the good times passed also, and again the solemn years of depression, want, stagnation of business and discouragement followed.

An affair that happened in 1841 will show the state of the city's finances. It will indicate also the business of the community and state—for the city was as prosperous as its citizens, and the state became bankrupt. The state scrip in 1842 sold at 78½ cents on the dollar and it was almost impossible to keep the city scrip

floating at any price, although it was receivable for city taxes and debts due to the municipality.

Noah Sutton and Charles Jackson were contractors for erecting the water works at the foot of Orleans street in 1841. When their work was completed a dispute arose between the contractors and the city as to the balance due on the contract. The parties finally agreed to submit the matter to arbitration. The arbitrators were Levi Cook, Reynolds Gillett and Thomas Palmer. The articles of arbitration were dated March 11, 1842, and were signed, on behalf of the city by the mayor, Dr. Zina Pitcher.

On May 25, the arbitrators awarded the contractors \$2,129 and costs.

Even after the award was made the city authorities proposed to resist the payment of the debt and refused to settle. This was in part due to the inability of the city to spare even \$2,000 from its treasury. It had little money, not enough even to pay interest on its bonds.

The city was the owner of quite a number of small parcels of land in various parts of town that had come to it from the Governor and Judges. These lots were not of much value, but if they could be sold, the money derived from the sale might be sufficient to pay the judgment.

## CITY UNABLE TO PAY ITS DEBTS

Jackson & Sutton had an execution issued for the amount of their award, and levied upon the most valuable of the city's real estate. They also attached the fire engines belonging to the fire department. The mayor called a special session of the council on June 15, 1842, "for the purpose of devising some means to prevent the sale of the fire engines." At this session it was resolved, "That a committee of three be appointed, of which the mayor shall be chairman, to receive proposals from and confer with 'The Fire Department of the City,' relative to the sale to them of the fire engines, hose and hose carts and other apparatus now in use of the fire department, and that the said committee be authorized to make such sale and conveyance for such consideration as they may deem for the best interests of the city."

At the time there was an incorporated organization called "The Fire Department of the City of Detroit." It was a tontine insurance organization. Its members were the firemen of the city, but it was a private and not a public corporation.

The attempt of the city to convey the city property to such a private organization for the purposes of evading payment of a just debt indicates to what depths of poverty the city had sunk through extravagance and profligacy.

The Fire Department declined to accept the property, but Sutton & Jackson were persuaded to release it from their levy, for the public good. The city now undertook to appeal to the Supreme Court from the

arbitration award. In perfecting the appeal it became necessary for the city to file a bond, and it was found somewhat difficult to obtain sureties on the bond. No one wanted to go on such a document, with the probability of having to pay the judgment of the higher court and await the slow action of an impoverished city to make reimbursement. The state of the city's finances was demonstrated by a resolution of the council, passed Aug. 9, 1842, as follows:

“Whereas, the depressed condition of the finances of the city requires not only the strictest economy in expenditures, but also a resort to all the resources of the city to enable the council to redeem the floating debt in the form of treasury warrants and the city due bills, and also to pay the interest on the outstanding bonds of the city; and,

“Whereas, it is suggested that it may be expedient to fund the said floating debt by issuing bonds payable at a period not very remote, and also to fund the interest due on such outstanding bonds; therefore,

“Resolved, that the acting mayor be requested to call a public meeting of the citizens at the city hall, at such time as he may deem most convenient to whom shall be submitted the expediency of levying a temporary tax on the public sewers of the city, also of funding the floating debt and interest aforesaid.”

With such an acknowledgment of poverty as this, fresh upon the records, it is small wonder that every one hesitated to go upon the city's appeal bond. However, the bond was finally signed, in the following February, by Henry N. Walker, John Owen and Chauncey Hurlbut, and to secure them the mayor executed to them a mortgage on the property of the city.

The proceeding is so extraordinary that a reference to the records and files in the case, that those interested in the matter can examine for themselves, may not be improper. The case, carried to the supreme court, was decided in favor of the contractors, and is reported in 1 Douglas, page 108. The file in the circuit court is No. 546½. The mortgage to the sureties is recorded in liber 13, on page 131, city records.

This mortgage is dated Feb. 6, 1843, and covers the old water works on Fort street (lots 7 and 8, military reservation); the new water works on the Dequindre farm, at the foot of Orleans street, with all engines, machinery, pipes and apparatus of every description connected with the hydraulic works; the Washington market on Larned street, and the several little parcels of land on Woodbridge street that formed the intake for the old water works.

When the case was tried in the supreme court at Kalamazoo, the award of the lower court was sustained and an execution was issued for the original amount with interest, \$2,204 and costs. Again the city property was levied upon.

The council now sought to "effect an amicable settlement" with Jackson and Sutton by turning over to them the city property in satisfaction of their claim. Nothing came of the attempt and the sheriff was directed to proceed and sell the property under his execution.

The city marshal was, on November 21, directed to advertise and sell all the property levied upon. This sale was in the interest of the city. Whatever sums were obtained in excess of the judgment were to be paid to the city and the purchasers were to pay the levy.



The lands were sold at the following prices:

Lot 7, S. Fort St. (old water works), to Henry H. Brown, \$450.

Lot 8, S. Fort St., (old water works), to John Scott, \$445.

Lot 36, section 7, Charles Jackson, \$70.

Lot 28, section 8, Samuel Bates, \$160.

Lot 25, section 12, Silas A. Bagg, \$41.

Lot 26, section 12, Silas A. Bagg, \$51.

Lot 27, section 12, Silas A. Bagg, \$70.

Lot 28, section 12, Noah Sutton, \$71.

Part of lot 79, section 7 (rear part of Detroit Opera House), H. R. Andrews, \$51.

Lot 13, North Woodbridge street, (intake of old water works), D. J. Campau, \$245.

Making a total of \$1,654.

From the avails of these sales and money in the treasury and the sale of the old engine at the water works for \$200, the judgment of Jackson & Sutton was satisfied.

As another illustration of the profits arising from the purchase of real estate in Detroit and holding it for a long period, the present values of these lots has been ascertained.

Lot 36 in section 7, sold in 1842 for \$70. It is now assessed at \$640,000.

Lot 28 in section 8, was sold for \$160. It is now assessed at \$640,000 and is worth \$1,000,000.

Lot 25 in section 12, on Bagley avenue, sold for \$41, and is now assessed at \$50,000.

Lot 26 in section 12, sold for \$51. Is now worth at least \$60,000.

Lot 27 in section 12, sold for \$70—is now worth at least \$60,000.

Lot 28 in section 12, sold for \$71—is now worth at least \$60,000.

### CITY DEBT

The city debt began in the year 1835. Before that time the city authorities were in the habit, from time to time, of issuing scrip that passed as currency, and was receivable for taxes and accounts due to the city. This scrip was never issued to any great amount and was readily taken care of as soon as the taxes began to be paid.

In 1835, however, the city authorities got their first taste of money borrowed on long time bonds.

The city was prosperous and most of the people could see nothing but perpetual good times ahead of them. But all this was changed in a few years and in 1843 the debt had grown to \$230,000, and the city could not pay the interest on it. The unpaid interest coupons were collected in the bank and demand was made for payment.

The inability of the city to pay its small debts and the interest coupons resulted in the calling of the free-men to take the matter into consideration and, if possible, to find a remedy.

The first meeting was called December 3, 1842, and the mayor, Douglas Houghton, explained the situation. A committee, consisting of Reynolds-Gillett, John Scott and Peter Desnoyer, was appointed, and they were in-

structed to report, at the adjourned meeting to be held December 10th, "some suitable means for the funding of the city's debt."

At the adjourned meeting this committee made a report, which was accepted and adopted, authorizing the common council to fund all floating debts of the city that were due or might become due to the end of the fiscal year, "including interest on city bonds," by issuing bonds payable within ten years bearing seven per cent interest. No bond to be issued for less than one hundred dollars.

The mayor at once gave notice of the ratification of this report by the council and bonds were issued as called for. These bonds were issued to individuals for the amount of the indebtedness to them, and were not issued and sold as bonds are usually disposed of. There might have been some question as to the legality of the bond issue for there was no law permitting this form of bonds. As the bonds, however, were only acknowledgments of debts previously and legally incurred, with an agreement to defer payment and to pay interest, they passed unquestioned. The city clerk, who (with the mayor), issued the bonds, was Caleb F. Davis, and the city treasurer was Daniel J. Campau. Mr. Campau records, with precision, the issue of each bond, to whom and for what given.

The first bond for \$120, was issued to Henry B. Brevoort, January 17, 1843, and a second bond for \$100 was also issued to Commodore Brevoort February 1, 1843.

No more of these little bonds were given out until a settlement was had with Joseph W. Brick, July 11, 1843. Mr. Brick had furnished iron pipe for the water works

(hydraulic department), and he wanted his money to use in his business. While he was not very clamorous, he was insistent and as he could not get money, he took these bonds.

Bonds Nos. 3 to 12, inclusive, were issued to him as follows:

No. 3, for \$1,592.50, for overdue coupons on old bonds.

No. 4, for \$380.35, for the same purpose.

No. 5, for \$1,908, for the same purpose.

No. 6, for \$600, for the same purpose.

The other bonds, 7 to 11, inclusive, were for \$500 each and number 12 for \$300 for indebtedness for iron pipe sold the city. The bonds all became due in ten years from the date of issue, with seven per cent interest.

#### CITY SCRIP OR SHIN PLASTERS

In 1840 a committee of the senate was appointed to inquire into the issuance of small bills or shin plasters by the city of Detroit. The report of the committee is without date and may be found on page 260 of the Senate Documents. It is signed by S. V. R. Trowbridge, chairman.

The report states that there was no law authorizing the issuing of these shin plasters. The amendment to the charter in 1827 authorized the council to issue bills in payment of debts, redeemable at pleasure, and these bills are receivable for debts due the corporation. This act was repealed by the "act to prevent the circulation of bills or tickets of a less denomination than one dollar," approved March 22, 1830.

The history of the shin plasters is as follows:

The recorder, Ross Wilkins, on 27 May, 1837, introduced an ordinance providing for the issuance of \$5,000 in due bills. This was passed. On July 8, 1837, the mayor, Henry Howard, proposed that the city issue \$5,000 more in due bills. This was passed on condition that the city effect a loan from one of the banks "upon the same terms as the loan was made on which the former issue was based." There was no record of any "former loan."

On August 8, another issue of \$2,000 was authorized.

August 28, \$5,000 was authorized.

October 21, \$3,000 was authorized.

On February 17, 1838, the mayor was authorized to procure engraved bills for \$10,000, of which \$1,500 was to be used to repair the University building and the remainder to redeem bills in circulation.

It appears from the city books that shin plasters issued up to March 31, 1838, were.....\$22,605.67  
Bills returned and paid..... 6,990.63

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Outstanding March 31, 1838..... 15,615.04

No new issues were made, but new bills were put in place of old and mutilated bills.

The circulation was reduced by March 30, 1839, to . . . . . \$12,323.45

Since that time new due bills were issued.. 506.35

---

and the treasurer has destroyed..... 2,172.90

---

leaving outstanding July 25, 1840.....\$10,656.90

The total debt in 1844, including the refunding bonds, was raised to \$268,670.40.

In connection with this statement one can read with interest the warning that a committee of the common council gave in 1841. This special committee consisted of Zina Pitcher, Alvah Ewers and Charles Moran, three as "level headed" men as the city contained at that time. The report is dated December 28, 1841:

"The special committee to whom was referred a resolution of the common council on the subject of ways and means,

Respectfully reports—

That the amount of interest annually due from the city of Detroit and payable in the city of New York is \$14,900. The amount due and payable at home is \$595, making the sum total of \$15,495.

The resources of the city are:

1st. Direct taxation, which at one-half of one per cent on the present valuation of property, will give \$13,119.08.

2nd. Water assessment on 500 families, without deducting expense of running, \$5,000.00.

3rd. Revenue derivable from the grand and lateral sewers if assessments equal to the interest of the cost of construction are levied upon the property of those who drain into them, \$18,119.08.

The general tax of  $\frac{1}{2}$  of one per cent, and the water tax of 1841 having been mostly paid in outstanding checks upon the treasurer of the city, which cannot be reissued, there is no available means in the treasury for the payment of interest, of which there is at this time due and unpaid, \$8,050.

To meet existing liabilities the committee see no course for the common council to pursue but to impose

an assessment at once upon all who drain into the main or lateral sewers, having reference to the benefits derived from their use, equal to the interest of the money expended on their construction; to be paid annually hereafter, unless commuted by the payment of a present sum to be fixed by the common council as an equivalent for the annual tax; from the payment of which the person so choosing to commute shall be forever thereafter exempted; or to dispose of certain lots owned by the city, or as a last resort, apply to the freemen for permission to impose a general tax of such a fractional part of one per cent as in the opinion of the common council may be required."

The total assessment of the city for the year 1843 was \$1,892,070.25, and the total tax levy was \$17,501.66, of which \$2,365.11 was for school purposes. The rate of taxation was \$9.25 cents on each one hundred dollars. At this time the assessed value was equal to thirty per cent of the real value, so that the taxes were heavier in proportion than they are at the present time.

## BANK FAILURES

Detroit and Michigan have been more than usually unfortunate in their bank failures.

In the early years the corporate names of the banks, given in full, were, "The President, Directors and Company of the ———— —Bank." Thus the names of our first bank organized in 1806 was: "The President, Directors & Company of the Bank of Detroit," and the next bank, in date of organization, in 1818, was the "President, Directors & Company of the Bank of Michigan." The official name was too long to be used on ordinary occasions and we will follow the custom of omitting most of the prefix.

The Bank of Detroit was organized under an act of the Governor and Judges in 1806. The act was disallowed or vetoed by Congress and the bank went out of existence as a corporation within a short time after it was organized.

The Bank of Michigan was organized in 1818 and carried on a successful business for many years.

In 1838 its official report shows that it had

Capital authorized . . . . .	\$850,000.00
Capital paid in . . . . .	500,000.00
Number of depositors . . . . .	391
Circulation of bills . . . . .	342,573.00
Deposits . . . . .	274,373.20

In 1841 the bank was unable to redeem its bills in specie and was forced to close its doors. It continued an existence for several years in winding up its affairs.



The Farmers & Mechanics' Bank was organized in 1830.

In 1838 it had capital, authorized.....	\$700,000.00
Capital paid in . . . . .	400,000.00
Circulation . . . . .	148,913.50
Deposits . . . . .	191,164.18

It was forced to close its doors in 1839.

(It subsequently resumed business and existed until 1869).

The Michigan State Bank was organized March 26, 1835.

In 1838 it had an authorized capital of.....	\$500,000.00
Of which there was paid in.....	200,000.00
It had bills in circulation.....	114,474.00
And deposits of . . . . .	244,028.30

The bank was closed in 1839.

Frederick H. Stevens was president and John Norton, Jr., was cashier.

(It subsequently resumed business and continued until the expiration of its charter in 1855).

The Bank of St. Clair was organized at St. Clair March 28, 1836, and moved to Detroit under an act of the legislature of February 11, 1842.

It was not in Detroit in 1838. Its statement in that year showed:

Capital authorized . . . . .	\$100,000.00
Paid in . . . . .	40,000.00
Circulation . . . . .	64,211.00
Depositors . . . . .	10
Deposits . . . . .	5,471.58
Coin owned by the bank.....	14,532.09

The report of the examiners regarding the "coin"

states that: "It is impossible to specify the amount in kind, the same being deposited under the seals of this bank, in the vaults of the Farmers and Mechanics' Bank of Michigan, for greater safety during the excitement on the frontier, caused by the Canadian war."

The bank ceased to exist in 1845.

#### BANK FUND

There was a provision included in the banking law in 1836 that every bank, thereafter organized, should pay, annually, one-half of one per cent of its capital stock to the Auditor General to create a fund which was to be used for paying the debts of any bank that failed.

This was called the "Bank Fund."

Each bank was to continue its annual payments to this fund until the bank had paid in an amount equal to three per cent of its capital, and it had thereafter to keep this amount good. When any bank failed its assets should first be exhausted to pay its debts, and the amount not so paid was to be taken from the "Bank Fund."

This Bank Fund in 1838 amounted to.....\$ 145.14 and during that year the following amounts were added to it:

Bank of Oakland.....	24.05
Farmers & Mechanics' Bank of Pontiac.....	1.23
Genesee County Bank.....	1.70
Bank of Brest.....	75.00
Bank of Saline.....	12.74
Bank of Coldwater.....	9.00

Bank of Marshall.....	27.94
Detroit City Bank.....	4.10
Farmers' Bank of Oakland.....	1.23
Bank of Lapeer.....	5.13
Bank of Goodrich.....	8.65
Bank of St. Clair.....	143.28
Wayne County Bank.....	7.80
Saginaw City Bank.....	2.05
Bank of Utica.....	23.21
Bank of Gibraltar.....	150.00
Bank of Ypsilanti.....	414.38
Farmers' Bank of Homer.....	188.92
Bank of Constantine.....	65.83

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Making a total of.....	\$1,311.38
Paid for printing.....	51.00

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Total of fund.....\$1,260.38

But the bank failures came so rapidly and were so disastrous that the "Bank Fund" could neither stay the tide of destruction nor satisfy depositors and creditors.

The state first exhausted the fund and then permitted overdrafts on the account.

The bank report of 1841 on the "Bank Fund" shows:

Overdrafts . . . . .	\$4,205.49
Amount of warrants drawn on the treasurer... 187.51	
	<hr/>
	\$4,393.00
Amount received . . . . .	280.00

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Amount now overdrawn.....\$4,113.00

Thus another attempt at communistic protection of the public came to a disastrous end.

Bank failures became so numerous that an act was passed June 22, 1837, suspending any action that might be taken to forfeit a bank charter, till May 16, 1838. Where a bank had failed to pay specie for its own notes, it was prohibited from paying dividends to its stockholders until specie payment was resumed.

A general Banking Act was passed March 15, 1837, and the former banking law was repealed.

Under the new law there was organized, in

1837, the Detroit City Bank. In 1838	
this bank had capital, paid in.....	\$60,000.00
Bills in Circulation .....	18,600.00
Deposits .....	64,964.25
Michigan Bank Safety Fund .....	4.10

In 1839 the bank failed.

While it continued in business it was very popular and its officers were of the best known citizens. The president was Henry M. Campbell. The other directors were Andrew T. Mc Reynolds, Edward Brooks, Cullen Brown, Julius Eldred, John Truax, and Charles Bissell. The cashier was F. H. Harris and the teller Dewitt C. Holbrook.

It was under the "Wild Cat" banking act of 1837 that banks, almost without capital, sprang up all over the state.

The law was all right in its inception but many persons who knew nothing about banking, went into the business with the idea that it was a short road to riches. Many others undertook the business with dishonest intent as they found that the law was loosely drawn and they could evade its safety provisions. The result of the banking was so disastrous that in 1839 the establishment of more banks under the act was pro-

hibited. The bank act was attacked in the courts and the law was declared unconstitutional and void.

The necessity for banks still existed and it was proposed to establish a state bank. This was, of course (as many thought) the proper way to make banking secure and to take the affairs out of private hands and place them out of danger in the control of the state.

An act was passed April 2, 1839, to establish "The State Bank of Michigan." It was to have a capital of \$2,000,000 and was to have nine branches in different parts of the state as follows; at Detroit, Monroe, Adrian, Ann Arbor, Niles, Jackson, Pontiac, Mt. Clemens and Marshall. It was expected that some of the Detroit banks would join the organization. This bank was to be the depository for all state funds. The law provided that the bank should be organized by February, 1840, but the distrust of banks and particularly of a state institution, was so great that it was impossible to complete the organization and the act was repealed February 16, 1842.

So many wild cat banks had been organized upon an unsound basis, that it became necessary for the state to take action before all of the assets of the banks were dissipated. Two acts were passed February 16, 1842, annulling the charters of sixty banks in the state. All of these banks were named in the act and their charters were annulled. Only a very few banks were left to transact business. Of the banks in Wayne County whose charters were annulled at this time there were the:

Wayne County Bank (established at Plymouth).

Detroit City Bank.

Bank of Michigan and

Michigan State Bank.

The only bank that survived the terrible ordeal was the Michigan Insurance Bank. This was originally organized in 1834 to conduct an insurance business, but its charter permitted it to engage in banking. Subsequent legislation permitted it to engage exclusively in banking, and it carried on that business until it sold out to the First National Bank. It made the proud boast that it "never closed its doors during business hours."

#### ECONOMY IN CITY AFFAIRS

The need of continued economy in the management of municipal affairs was apparent to every one. The council, in 1843, adopted the following resolutions for that purpose:

"Resolved, That it is expedient and necessary to introduce a system of retrenchment and economy in the fiscal affairs of the corporation of this city, and therefore that a committee be appointed to report on the subject of the reduction of salaries and fees of all officers of this corporation."

It was proposed to prohibit the further issue of shinplasters and warrants, but the council would not consent to it.

The officers appointed by the council, were notified in advance of their appointment, that their salaries would be reduced as soon as the council could arrange a

schedule. The salaries of nearly all city officers were reduced and several offices abolished or the work of two offices combined in one appointee.

The interest on the city bonds could not be met as it came due. A freeman's meeting authorized the funding of a portion of the interest coupons, thus increasing the bonded debt, but some bond owners wanted their money and were not willing to take new bonds. William Dwight, who held \$17,000 of bonds, wrote that he must have the money as he had other uses for it. John Jacob Astor also insisted on having his coupons paid in money, but was willing to let the bonds remain unpaid to suit the convenience of the city. To Mr. Astor the mayor wrote in 1844, that the city had not been able to pay the interest in the past, but, he added, "the energetic and faithful efforts we have made to meet our engagements and the continued struggle we intend to make for that purpose," give the city encouragement that the coupons will soon be paid. The coupons were protested in New York City for non-payment.

The first detailed statement of the anticipated expenses of the city, appears in the council proceedings for 1845, for the ensuing year.

The anticipated expenditures were:

Interest on bonds .....	\$18,247
Warrant due J. W. Brick (who had furnished pipe for the water works) .....	1,117
Contingent expenses .....	8,500
<hr/>	
Total .....	\$27,864

That is, it cost \$8,500 to run the city for a year,

while it cost more than twice that amount to pay the interest on the public debt.

The revenues were:

		\$27,864
Water assessments .....	\$8,000	
Licenses .....	3,500	
Delinquent taxes .....	1,000	
Rents .....	1,500	
	<hr/>	14,000

Showing a deficiency of .....	\$13,864
Floating debt outstanding .....	\$3,410.59
Due bills outstanding .....	6,411.94
	<hr/>
	\$9,812.53

Of which there will probably be

called for .....	\$5,000.00	\$5,000
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Making a deficiency of .....	\$18,864
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One of the items in the list of assets of the city was \$1,408.28 in bills of the Bank of Michigan. These were sold in 1845 at the rate of 30 cents on the dollar.



## EASTERN CREDITORS

Among the eastern creditors who held our bonds in 1845 were John Jacob Astor, Joseph W. Brick and Cornelius Van Schaack Roosevelt, (grandfather of ex-President Roosevelt). I have many letters from all of these men urging payment of the moneys due to them. Some of the interest coupons were protested for non-payment at the bank in New York.

Sometimes the city treasurer would get enough money to pay a bond or some interest coupons and he would send to New York, deducting one per cent for exchange. The bonds were payable in New York and Mr. Roosevelt thought it unjust that the exchange should be deducted.

Mr. Astor, in his letters, always appears to look on the bright side of the future. He was willing to wait for better times and requested the city authorities to let him know when the bonds or coupons could be paid.

Mr. Brick's bonds came to him in payment for iron pipe used in extensions of the water works. He needed the money for his manufacturing business and urged its payment, but was not as bitter in his letter as was Mr. Roosevelt.

General John R. Williams was mayor of the city. He had been selected for that position because of his well known ability to bring the city out of its slough of despond, if any one could, a confidence never misplaced. It took years of hard work and economy to bring the city into good financial condition. In 1845 its bonds could not be sold on the market. All that were dis-

posed of were forced upon the present bond holders in exchange for old matured bonds or for coupons overdue, and some of them protested.

#### LETTER FROM MR. ROOSEVELT

One of Mr. Roosevelt's letters reads as follows:

“New York, Nov. 14, 1845.

Dear Sir: Your several letters were received in due course, together with the enclosures—a bond for eleven hundred sixty-four and twenty-seven hundredths, and check for six hundred sixty-three and twenty hundredths.

It were useless for me to express an opinion of the honesty of the majority of the committee on ways and means, who insisted upon putting off a creditor of their city, with its worthless bonds, when it was in their power to have paid the amount due. The bond in question, in which three parties were interested, has been sold to the one who would give the most for it, which was 80½ cents on the dollar—the course the majority of the committee thought proper to take has therefore subjected the holders of this debt to the loss of the difference. But it appears to me that the most disgraceful act on the part of the city is to make the paltry charge of one per cent for a draft on New York, after having pledged itself to pay its interest in that city.

In these remarks you will, of course, understand me as making no personal reflections on yourself, at the same time you will please lay this letter before the committee on ways and means.

Respectfully Yours,

C. V. S. Roosevelt.

Hon. John R. Williams, mayor of the city of Detroit.

I enclose 12 coupons \$210, for which you will please forward me a check on New York on the best terms that you are enabled to do.

C. V. S. R."

During the next year the interest coupons, as they were presented, were taken up and bonds issued in their stead. It was not possible for the city to raise money to pay the interest and those who were unwilling to accept the new bonds were permitted to hold their coupons to await the coming of better times.

A committee of the council was appointed Jan. 19, 1847, to recommend alterations in the city charter "in order to bring about a more economical and effective administration of the affairs of the city." The committee consisted of Edmund A. Brush, William Barclay and Theodore Williams. The mayor, John R. Williams, was added to the committee.

The report made Feb. 9, is long and very interesting. The report begins by stating that "the resources of the city carefully managed are adequate to its wants." The system of conducting the city affairs was well enough when the place was small, but would not do at the present time.

The debt of the city was \$285,000, created for these purposes:

Old hydraulic works, (producing no income)...	\$ 34,000
New hydraulic works, (producing \$6,000).....	117,000
Grand sewer.....	23,000
Woodward avenue sewer.....	2,000
Lateral sewers.....	1,500
Alley sewers.....	7,000

City hall market (produces \$1,300).....	15,000
Berthelet market (produces \$200).....	8,300
Washington market (produces nothing).....	3,200
Fireman's hall (pays in city use).....	3,000
Fire department.....	13,000
Funded debt.....	41,000
Floating debt, not on interest.....	5,000
"Unaccounted for and never will be".....	12,000
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Total . . . . .	\$285,000

The expense of interest for the hydraulic works was \$10,570, and the return was \$6,000, leaving an annual deficit of \$4,570. No return was obtained from the sewer system.

The income from the city hall market was \$1,300 or \$150 more than the interest on the investment.

The interest on the investment in the two other markets was \$805 and the income only \$200. The fire department, of course, could not be expected to pay a money return. The "unaccounted for" item of \$12,000 is interesting.

Annual interest to be paid.....	\$19,000
Annual expenses.....	9,000
Annual floating debt.....	5,000
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Total . . . . .	\$33,000
Annual ordinary tax.....	\$12,000
Annual tax for interest.....	8,000
Contingent receipts.....	11,000
Loss to city by "no license" system.....	5,000
<hr/>	
	\$36,000

The committee recommended that a sewer tax be imposed upon every lot and cellar drained by the sewers, of from 50 cents to \$1.50 each.

The Washington market should be sold and the Berthelet market made available for some other purpose, so as to relieve the city from the incumbrance.

The water works should be made productive. It should return \$8,000 per year instead of \$6,000. "It is the fault of the system and not of any individual that it is not productive."

#### BUSINESS AGENT FOR THE CITY

In order to accomplish what is desired, "it is indispensably necessary that the council have power to appoint a competent business agent whose relations to the city can be expressed in a single phrase. It must be that of an agent who devotes all his time to the business of his principal, whose compensation secures him from personal cares of living, and the prominence of whose situation depends on the manner in which he conducts and promotes the interest of his employer." The object is to so conduct the business of the city as to supersede the necessity of meetings of the council oftener than once a month for the purposes of municipal legislation; to receive and act upon the monthly reports of the superintendents and to deliberate and act upon results and not upon details.

One of the evidences of economy in 1847 was the removal of the stalls from the Washington market and the use of the building for a school house. The market had never paid expenses, and a school building was needed in that quarter of the city.

## MERCHANTS EXCHANGE

The legislature of 1848 made several changes in the city charter and authorized the incorporation of the Detroit Merchants' Exchange Co. The incorporators were James Abbott, Benjamin B. Kercheval, William Brewster, Charles Howard, Zachariah Chandler and Samuel Lewis. The object of the company was to facilitate and promote trade and commerce by providing a suitable place for the meeting of persons interested in trade and commerce and a reading room and library connected therewith.

The Detroit Young Men's society was permitted to join with them in the erection of a suitable building. This was a forerunner of the board of trade, and was one of the evidences of returning prosperity to our city. The employment of a business agent was never discussed by the legislature.

## START PAYING DEBT

The council levied and collected a sewer tax; collected the water rates more carefully than it had done before this time; rented the City Hall for theatrical and other purposes, and economized in many ways. The citizens' meeting granted a larger appropriation than usual, to take care of the city debt, and some headway was now being made in reducing that incubus. When eastern bondholders presented their bonds or coupons they were no longer told that the treasury was depleted, but their claims were paid.

## BETTER TIMES

The city treasurer, in March, 1848, reported that between the 24th of March, 1847, and the first of March, 1848, he had canceled \$40,902.65 in warrants and due bills; he had paid \$22,688.33 in interest and had paid \$5,568 on the city debt.

At the meeting of the legislature in 1849 a bill was introduced which, with some slight alterations, was passed in February of that year. It greatly altered the forms of local government. It was proposed to elect by popular vote the recorder, attorney, clerk, treasurer, marshal, superintendent and engineer of the water works, city physician, director of the poor, sexton, clerks of the market, surveyor, inspectors of wood and all other inspectors, weigh masters, supervisors of streets and chimney sweeps. All of these offices had, until this time, been filled by appointment.

## ALL OFFICES ELECTIVE

In order that the "people should have a voice in the selection of their servants," it was now determined to take the appointing power from the mayor and council and elect every officeholder.

One of the city papers said, concerning the matter: "If the project succeeds, for which there can be no argument but partisan purposes, a few years will exhibit the city finances in the old condition of confusion, speculation, squandering and repudiation."

It is not evident that the result so much feared ever happened, for from this time forward for several years, business increased and the city prospered.

The Detroit Savings Fund Institute, now the Detroit Savings Bank, was organized in February, 1849, though it did not begin business until later in the year.

The Michigan Central Railroad depot at the foot of Third street, was completed, and in announcing that event it was stated that the income of the railroad for the preceding twelve months had reached the enormous sum of \$373,981.81.

The Detroit Gas Co. was organized in February.

The new Methodist church, a large building located on the southwest corner of Woodward avenue and State street, was completed early in the year, and the little old Methodist church which was built on the northeast corner of Woodward avenue and Congress street, was moved off down Lafayette avenue, soon "to be opened as a new church." The building lately occupied by the T. B. Rayl Co. was erected in 1849 on the site of the little Methodist church. Work was begun on the erection of the Biddle House in April. This building was originally planned to be 112 feet on Jefferson avenue and 150 feet on Randolph street. It was located on the site of the American House, or Wales' hotel, which was destroyed by the great fire of 1848.

The Advertiser of April 18, 1849, had this to say: "Pulling down and building up. In every part of the city we see unmistakable signs of progress and improvement. The old wooden buildings are constantly giving way to make place for new and elegant brick ones. Yesterday the last of the wooden buildings in



the center of the Oddfellows' hall block were moved and their places will soon be supplied with a beautiful brick block in a uniform style with the adjoining buildings."

The growth of the city was so rapid that the city hall market was entirely inadequate and the council was compelled to make additions to the market building. The hall was used for public meetings upon all occasions for lectures, concerts and religious services. Every Sunday it was used by some religious society that had no building of its own.

The Mariners' church was erected on the corner of Woodward avenue and Woodbridge street. The first floor was built for commercial purposes and the second floor was intended for religious purposes. As soon as the building was completed the postoffice occupied the ground floor.

The church was the gift of Mrs. Julia Anderson and her sister, Miss Charlotte M. Taylor. Mrs. Anderson had formerly lived on the corner of the street but there was a long row of small stores, twelve in number, on the north side of Woodbridge street, between Woodward avenue and Griswold street.

## THE GREAT FIRE OF 1848

On the ninth of May, 1848, a fire swept over the lands between Randolph street and Woodward avenue, south of Jefferson avenue, destroying nearly every building in that district. The fire also extended along Jefferson avenue to Beaubien street. The loss was estimated at \$300,000. New buildings were springing up in every part of this burnt district in 1849. Along Jefferson avenue from the corner of Brush street four large brick buildings were erected. The one on the corner was occupied by Gideon Paull for a drug store. Haigh's drug store was afterward located here.

## CITY FINANCES IN 1849

In the Advertiser of May 18, 1849, is a statement of the finances of the city.

Bonds of the city March 14, 1849 .....	\$285,448.00
Annual interest .....	18,791.00
Property of the city assessed at.....	2,300,292.00
Tax levy under act of 1841 .....	11,501.46
There was a balance of .....	9,254.00
Act of March 2, 1849, tax levy .....	8,000.00
This still left unprovided for .....	1,254.00

A citizens' meeting was called to provide for the deficiency.

Receipts of city March 21, 1848, to March 21,

1849, were .....	\$41,882.74
Expenses .....	39,062.29
Receipts from licenses .....	6,169.42

Water works .....	9,311.41
New cemetery on Gouin farm .....	91.00
<hr/>	
Total .....	\$15,571.83
Expenditures, water works .....	\$ 4,162.52
Interest .....	17,710.03
Fire department .....	3,965.64
<hr/>	
Total .....	\$25,838.19

#### STATE FAIR

The first state fair was held in Detroit in 1849. The grounds were on the west side of Woodward avenue between Columbia and High streets.

#### ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL ERECTED

St. Mary's Hospital—the new hospital—was built by popular subscriptions in 1849 and was used, in part, for the cholera patients of that year.

#### DETROIT AND PONTIAC RAILROAD SHOPS BURN.

The depot of the Detroit & Pontiac Railroad was on Gratiot avenue. The passenger depot was on the south side, between Farmer street and Woodward, and extended through to the Campus Martius. The machine shop was on the opposite side of Gratiot avenue, where the Hudson building now stands. The machine shop was destroyed by fire May 22, 1849.

The Catholic cathedral on the corner of Jefferson avenue and St. Antoine street, was completed in 1849, though the corner stone was laid in 1845.

#### NEW BUILDINGS

June 9, 1849. "New buildings—it is a sure proof of the rapid growth of the city to see the large number of new brick blocks going up in every part of the city. We notice that the large wooden building, corner of Woodward avenue and Atwater street, formerly occupied by John Thompson, is being removed to give place to a splendid five-story brick building."

John Owen was nominated for governor on the Whig ticket. He declined the nomination, but it was several weeks before the committee consented to receive his declination. Flavius J. Littlejohn was nominated in his place, September 21, 1849.

Three old wooden buildings opposite the Michigan Exchange were burned August 10, 1849.

The Second Presbyterian church, on the corner of Wayne street and Lafayette avenue, was built during the summer of 1849.

## CHOLERA DRIVES OFFICIALS AWAY

During the cholera scare in 1849, many of the officials left the city. The newspaper in commenting on the lack of courage of these men said:

“Movements of the Unterrified—We take pleasure in announcing that Deputy Marshal (Alexander H.) Stowell has returned to the limits of the city. The sheriff is expected soon. One of our justice’s offices has just been reopened. Business generally begins to revive. The county clerk has not been heard from since he slunk from view over the summit of one of the New England mountains. We take pleasure in stating that the chief of the city police has remained firm at his post during the whole season.”

## TRINITY CHURCH MOVED

Trinity church—The Irish Catholic church—on the northwest corner of Bates street and Cadillac square, was, in 1849, moved to the corner of Porter and Sixth streets. The building was erected in 1818 at the northeast corner of Larned street and Woodward avenue for a Presbyterian church, but was later moved to the corner of Bates street and Cadillac square where it was used for a Universalist church and later for a hospital. About 1843, it was sold to the Catholics.

## SHOW WINDOWS—THE LARGEST GLASS YET

“George Doty, jeweler, has purchased and is fitting up the building on the west end of the Daily Advertiser block, corner of Jefferson avenue, in a style superior to anything in the western states. His show windows will be a curiosity. The main glass in each of them is imported French plate, five by seven feet in size and cost \$300. We believe these are the largest glass west of New York City, not excepting the large fine ones in Cincinnati. Next door to him is our barberous neighbor, who also has a show window.”

The “barberous” neighbor was Tate, the hair dresser.

The city sextons reported 159 deaths from cholera during the summer.

## PENNY PAPER PUBLISHED

The Detroit Daily Herald, “a daily paper for the million at one cent a copy,” began its publication November 26, 1849. The paper ran for a little more than a year. The printing office was on the west side of Griswold street, two doors above the corner of Jefferson avenue.

The Detroit City Guards was organized in August.

Only one train each way ran daily, during the winter of 1849, over the Michigan Central Railroad.

The track of the Detroit & Pontiac Railroad on Gratiot avenue was torn up by a mob of citizens December

13, 1849. The track had long been a nuisance on the street and the company had several times agreed to remove it or repair it. They had done neither. The mob was headed by respectable citizens, among them Stephen B. Morse and Maj. John V. Ruehle. A number of the rioters were arrested and brought before Justice Walker. They declined to give bail and applied for a writ of habeas corpus to Recorder Marshall J. Bacon. The recorder discharged the men from custody.

The railroad discontinued running cars because a part of its track was torn up. The citizens were exasperated and a line of stages was at once started between Detroit and Pontiac. The stages ran from Andrews' Railroad hotel (where the Detroit opera house is now located) in Detroit, to the Hodges house in Pontiac.

Here we will, for the present, leave the city on the high road to prosperity.

#### OWNERS OF LANDS IN OLD DETROIT AT VARIOUS TIMES BEFORE THE FIRE OF 1805.

The numbers refer to the numbers on the map.

1. Guard house lot belonging to the King.
2. Jean Bte. Chapoton and Felicite Cicire, his wife, in 1770 and later by David Campbell and Samuel Fynn. Lot was 34x66 feet.
3. David Campbell and Samuel Fynn. William Graham and Gregor McGregor. After McGregor died the executors of his will, James Rankin and James Abbott, sold his interest to James Sterling. The lot was 30x70 feet.

4. Marie Julie (Reaume) Hay, widow of Jehu Hay, who was lieutenant governor of Detroit following Henry Hamilton. It was said that Governor Hay was buried on this lot. Mrs. Hay's heirs sold the lot to John McGregor. The lot was 70 feet front on St. Peter street.
5. Council House. This lot was at one time owned by James Sterling.
6. Mess House. Owned, at one time by Catherine De Ruisseau widow of Alexis DeRuisseau, and later by James Cassety (1769). The lot was 33x39 feet.
7. A long list of owners and frequent change in title. The lot was 42x45 feet. The owners were: Isaac Williams; Jacques Campau (1774); William Sterling; Robert Henry; John Farrel with James Abbott, 1768. Lewis Campau sold to George Knaggs before 1768.
8. Conrad Seek. Seek was for some years a prisoner among the Indians. He left them and passed the latter end of his life in Detroit. His daughter Maria married Martin Story. Colin Andrews.
9. Legarde Goyur, Sept., 1725; John Steadman; William Edgar; John Edgar; Alexander and William Macomb; George Meldrum.
10. Thomas Robinson, mariner; William Robertson.
11. Claude Thomas Gouin; James Sterling; Louis Campau, and his wife, Marie Robert; George Knaggs.
12. Pierre Barrois; Thomas Cox (inn keeper); Thomas McCree; John Ash; Stacy Horner; Isaac Todd; James McGill and John Dodemead. The lot was 40x120 feet.



13. Edgar and Rankin; same as lot 12. The entire parcel was 86 feet by 186 feet in depth.
14. Sanschagrin: George McDougall; Campbell, Andrews and Meldrum (1773); Nicholas Stephens, Jr.; Cornelius Van Schaack; Jacobus Taylor; Anthony Van Schaack and Garrett Taylor. The lot was 42 feet long. Alphonse de Tonty, the commandant lived here and died in 1827. Jean Chapoton, surgeon, also lived here, in 1725.
15. This lot was 40 by 118 feet, and apparently was, at various times, divided and owned by different parties. Some times the parcels were united in one ownership. Baptiste Dubarge and Louise Courtois, his wife (20x44 feet); Nicolas Lasalle; Dufount; Courtways (east part of lot, 1767); William Edgar and Frederick Hambach.
16. Jean Baptiste Duberger dit Sanschagrin, a baker. His wife was Marie Courtois. James Campau and his wife Catherine Menard; James Cassety; Lansing and Graverat; Hyacinth Reaume; James Gordon and Alexander Macomb, east 21 feet. The size of the lot is variously estimated. One deed gives it 42 feet wide and another 30 by 34 feet.
17. This lot is given as 46 by 49 feet and was owned, at different times, by William Brown (he was a doctor for many years); William Edgar; George Lyons; John Robertson; James Cassety; Nathan Williams.
18. Hugh Boyle (49 feet wide with a new house, Oct. 13, 1766); Robert Navarre (Royal Notary), granted to him Nov. 26, 1741; Alexander Ellice; George McDougall, 1774. His wife was Marie Francoise Navarre.

19. Hugh Boyle, paid £800 for the lot in 1768. Labadie (owned the west part of the lot in 1768). George McDougall and Marianne his wife (1768). She was a daughter of Robert Navarre the royal notary. Alexander Ellice. James Thompson. The lot was 49 feet wide and extended to the pickets of the fort.
20. George Meldrum; Chapman Abraham; Graverat and Visger.
21. Hyacinth Reaume; Oliver Wisewell; Hugh Callaghan.
22. Lot 31 by 24 feet. Thomas McKee; Alexander and William Macomb; Teller and Groesbeck.
23. Lot 74 feet on St. Louis street and  $27\frac{1}{2}$  feet on Ste. Anne street. Catherine Trill; Isaac Todd and James McGill as attorneys for John Strubuell.
24. Apparently the lot was at one time divided into three parcels owned as follows: West part, Alexander Grant; middle part, Thomas Cox; east part, Duperon Baby; other owners were: Pierre Barrois, Joseph Cabaccier, 96 feet wide, extending to the picket line; Joseph Vissiere; William Forsyth. There was a mortgage at one time on the entire parcel held by McTavish and Bannerman. Forsyth was a tavern keeper and had a famous tavern on the land. His stepson was John Kinzie of Chicago. Thomas Cox was also an inn keeper and preceded Forsyth in that business.
25. This lot was 80 by 100 feet and was within the citadel. The lot took in a portion of the barracks. The easterly nine feet was taken to open St. Germain street. The owners were: John Steadman; Alexander and William Macomb;

Duperon Baby had title to the west part of the lot at one time. James Cassety owned a parcel 42 by 80 feet.

26. Picote de Belestre, the last French commandant (1760), sold to Nicolas Vermette. Belestre purchased back from Vermette and then sold to Henry Van Schaack and Sampson Fleming in 1767. Fleming purchased the interest of Van Schaack March 8, 1768. The size of the lot is given as 30 by 54 feet.
27. Public property, belonging to the King.
28. George Cottrell.
29. James Phyn; Alexander Ellice; John Porteus; Philip Dejean and Nicolas Perrot; Isaac Todd and Richard McNeil, Sept. 9, 1767; Thomas Williams and Richard Van Allen.
30. Sometimes owned in common with lot 29. Henry Berthelet; Thomas Williams and Richard Van Allen; Isaac Todd and Richard McNeil, bought Sept. 9, 1767; Philip Dejean and Nicolas Perrot, sold Sept. 9, 1767, for £200; William Maxwell; Alexander and William Macomb.
31. Chapman Abraham, in 1767; Robert McWilliams and Montague Tremble; John Askin, Jr., and William Robertson, April 4, 1799.
32. Jean Farrell; Pierre Lebutte, Jr., (Chene); John Martin (Martin, Tremble and Co.); James Abbott.
33. Simon McTavish and James Bannerman; Norman McLeod and John McNamara; John Wetherhead (Jehu Hay, agent); James Sterling.
34. Zacharie Cicotte and his wife Angelique Godefroy; George McBeath and Richard Wright; Richard

- Wright, David White and George Lyons; James Rankin and William Edgar.
35. Angelique Godefroy, widow of Zacharie Cicotte; Louis Bellair; Adhemar St. Martin (or Antoine St. Martin); Alexis Desruisseau. His widow was Catherine Godefroy. William Edgar and James Rankin bought the west 21 feet in width by 25 feet in depth of this lot. Lot is 59 by 45 feet.
  36. At one time owned by the Campau Estate, Jean Baptiste Campau, Jacques Campau, Simon Campau, Louis Campau, Therese Campau who was the wife of Charles Andre Barthe; Jehu Hay and Marie Julie (Reaume) Hay, his wife; George Forsyth, one of the sons of William Forsyth; Alexander Dyce.
  37. Cornelius Van Tice; Edward Ridley and James Bennett; David Campbell; Vessier.
  38. Church of Ste. Anne.
  39. James Sterling; James Thompson.
  40. James Sterling; James Thompson.
  41. Jean Baptiste Creste; Grobb and Dauller. The lot was 32 feet wide by 55 feet deep. Sally Ainse, a half breed Indian who had great influence with the Indians. She, at one time, owned 16 feet of lot 42.
  42. Sally Ainse, east 16 feet of this lot. Therese La Sage, wife of Doctor Chatelin Derigne. In one deed he is called Antoine Chatelain; Gregor McGregor, who was sheriff of the western district, which included Detroit; Mathew Dolson; Elijah Phelps, a carpenter.
  43. Part of the lot belonged to the Church of Ste. Anne. François Gamelin, Jr., owned the west 30

- feet, bounded east by the church. Theophilus Le May and Jacob Schieffelein.
44. Pierre Belleperche; Jehu Hay.
  45. Augustin Lafoy.
  46. Louis Thibault.
  47. Pierre Desnoyers.
  48. Joseph Bondie (1741).
  49. Jeanne Cardinal and her husband Laurent Parent sold this lot in 1741 to Pierre St. Cosme.
  50. The title to this lot passed through many hands, and it was divided into various parcels. The names of the various owners were: Nicolas Perrot; Abraham Chapman; Jean Pillett (or La Barge) north part; Boutin; Pierre Descompte Labadie and Angelique Laselle his wife; J. La Salle, Jr. (1760); Simon Gendron, east part; Etienne Languedoc, tailor; Nicolas Vermette and Bourgongnon; Joseph Bondy, east part; Henry Van Schaack and Sampson Fleming; Laurent Parent, west part; Jeanne Cardinal was his widow; Pierre St. Cosme (1765); Philip Dejean, the notorious justice of the peace; Thomas Robinson; Edward Mumford; John Wetherhead.
  51. Picote de Belestre, the Commandant, occupied this as the Indian store; James, or John, With-erhead in 1774; Henry Van Schaack and Sampson Fleming.
  52. Public Jail. This is one of the parcels of land that the British commandant claimed as public property, alleging that the French commandant, Belestre, had no right of private ownership in the land as it belonged to the French government.
  53. L'Enfant.

54. Philip Belanger—From Ste. Anne's records, he was a master mason, living on St. Jacques street, married Isabelle Valle. He was a native of Sainte Famille, in the city of Quebec, and died Sept. 15, 1800.
55. Jean Bte. Creste, master tailor; William Brown, doctor; John Cornwall and William Miller.
56. Francois Gobeille. His wife was Rose Fortier and their daughter Marie Louise Gobeille became the wife of Pierre Jean Desnoyers the grandfather of Rev. Father Ernest Desnoyers Van Dyke.
57. Jean Baptiste Creste; Joseph Pouget; George Meldrum and William Park; Margaret Wood; James Donaldson.
58. Joseph Serre dit St. Jean, master tailor, June 24, 1778; Presque Cote; Jean Bte. Pierre.
59. Pierre Bourgia dit Provencal; Alexander and William Macomb; Joseph St. Marie; Andre Bennite, master mason; Pierre Drouillard; Presque Cote; Joseph Serre dit St. Jean, tailor.
60. Jehu Hay, lieutenant governor; Philip Belanger; Dedrick Brehm; Presque Cote; Richard Cornwall; Samuel Dollwood; Chatelain Derigney; Charles Reaume; James May, judge of county court.
61. George McDougall; John Welch; Charles Reaume; Pierre Reaume; Isaac Gagnier; John Bte. Montreuil; James Sterling; Walter Hume; William Edgar.
62. Francois Bellette; James Sterling, west part of the lot; Elizabeth St. Aubin, widow of Charles Poupard dit Lafleur; William McDowell Scott, physician. Possibly the church owned a portion of this lot at one time. James (or Joseph)

- Greenwood, east part of the lot; William Park, east part of the lot.
63. Charles Poupard dit Lafleur, and Elizabeth St. Aubin his wife; John Dodge and William Tucker; William Park; Francois Bellette.
64. ....
65. Duperon Baby; Michel Cattin dit Barron.
66. Thomas Cox.
67. ....
68. Charles Moran.
69. Antoine Bernard dit Lafontaine; William Shaw; Gregor McGregor, the sheriff, had a mortgage on this lot.
70. Thomas Williams. He was justice of the peace and register of deeds under British rule. He married Cecile, sister of Joseph Campau. His only son John R. Williams was the first elected mayor of Detroit.

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